

MUSIC & IDENTITY



Transformation & Negotiation

Eric Akrofi, Maria Smit & Stig-Magnus Thorsén



MUSIC AND IDENTITY

Transformation and Negotiation

Eric Akrofi, Maria Smit & Stig-Magnus Thorsén (Eds.)



Music and Identity
Transformation and Negotiation

Published by AFRICAN SUN MeDIA, Stellenbosch 7600
www.africansunmedia.co.za
www.sun-e-shop.co.za

All rights reserved.
Copyright © 2007 Eric Akrofi, Maria Smit & Stig-Magnus Thorsén

No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any electronic, photographic or mechanical means, including photocopying and recording on record, tape or laser disk, on microfilm, via the Internet, by e-mail, or by any other information storage and retrieval system, without prior written permission by the publisher.

First edition 2007
ISBN: 978-1-919980-85-0

e-ISBN: 978-1-919980-97-3

DOI: 10.18820/9781919980973

Cover design by Soretha Botha.
Typesetting by AFRICAN SUN MeDIA Pty. (Ltd.)
Set in 10/12 Warnock Pro

SUN PRess is an imprint of AFRICAN SUN MeDIA Pty. (Ltd.). Academic, professional and reference works are published under this imprint in print and electronic format. This publication may be ordered directly from www.sun-e-shop.co.za

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword	i
<i>Eric Acrofi, Maria Smit and Stig-Magnus Thorsén</i>	
Introduction	iii
<i>Christine Lucia</i>	

CONCEPTS OF IDENTITY

<i>Iph'indlela?</i> Where is the way? Resurrecting an African identity through popular music in the post-apartheid South Africa	3
<i>Thembela Vokwana, University of South Africa</i>	
Singing the nation: negotiating South African identity through choral music	21
<i>Nicol Claire Hammond, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa</i>	
Tonic Sol-fa: An exogenous aspect of South African musical identity	37
<i>Robin S. Stevens, Deakin University, Australia</i>	
Music in the Italian prisoner of war camps in South Africa during the Second World War	53
<i>Donato Somma, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa</i>	
Constructing the relevant listener: Power, knowledge and the construction of identity in the discourse of musical autonomy	69
<i>Tobias Pontara, University of Stockholm, Sweden</i>	
The role of music in preserving the cultural identity of a migrant community: A case study of Duakor fishermen	87
<i>Eric Akrofi, Walter Sisulu University, South Africa</i>	
<i>Nicholas Kofie, University of Cape Coast, Ghana</i>	
Encountering South African music from an Australian perspective: A kaleidoscopic voyage of discovery	99
<i>Dawn Joseph, Deakin University, Australia</i>	

Identity dynamics in popular and religious music: Mary Atieno and the International Fellowship Church Choir (IFC)	113
<i>Jean Kidula, University of Georgia, Athens, USA</i>	
Music and cultural identity among Kurdish musicians in Stockholm	131
<i>Andreas Engström, University of Stockholm, Sweden</i>	
The colonial influence on music education in Ghana and South Africa	143
<i>Eric Akrofi, Walter Sisulu University, South Africa</i>	
<i>James Flolu, University of Education, Winneba, Ghana</i>	

MUSIC AND DISCOURSE

Travesty or prophecy? Views of South African black choral composition	161
<i>Christine Lucia</i>	
The hymnic identities of the Afrikaner	181
<i>Elsabé Kloppers, University of Pretoria, South Africa</i>	
Jazz in <i>Drum</i> , an ambiguous discourse: “Matshikeze” and the short stories in the 1950s	199
<i>Leif Lorentzon, University of Stockholm, Sweden</i>	
Facilitating the formation of personal and professional identities of Arts and Culture educators	215
<i>Maria Smit, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa</i>	

MUSICAL ENCOUNTERS

Tourism and cultural identity: conservation or commodification?	235
<i>Minette Mans, Namibia</i>	
African music in global diasporic discourse: Identity explorations of South African artist Johnny Mbizo Dyani	257
<i>Patricia Achieng Opondo, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa</i>	
Reidentifying an auditory community: worship in an Independent South African Church	277
<i>Christy M. Smith, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa</i>	
The musicians behind bars: can music help renew identities?	297
<i>Zoliswa Twani, Walter Sisulu University, South Africa</i>	

Sweden in play with South Africa: personal musical experiences in postcolonial perspectives	311
<i>Stig-Magnus Thorsén, Göteborg University, Sweden</i>	
Storytelling as mediator between worlds	327
<i>Sandie Malan, Bridge House School and Stellenbosch University, South Africa</i>	
<i>Djembe, darbuka</i> or drum set in music school – cultural diversity in Scandinavian music education	347
<i>Eva Fock, Independent Ethnomusicologist, Denmark</i>	
Why localise a church's music? Musical change, meanings and cultural identities in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia	367
<i>Jan Hellberg, Åbo Akademi University, Åbo/Turku, Finland</i>	
<i>Intonjane</i> Music: a forum of identity formation for Xhosa women	383
<i>Luvuyo Dontsa, Walter Sisulu University, South Africa</i>	

FOREWORD

South Africa and Sweden have a long history of cooperation, which intensified during the last decades of the 20th century. Culture then came into focus, mirroring a variety of political and social changes. In the mid 1990s musicology emerged as a new area. A Travelling Institute for Music Research in South Africa (TIMR), established in 1999, aimed at building capacity and initiating common research projects. The South African National Research Foundation (NRF) and the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) provided funds for TIMR (which was active from 1999 until 2004), resulting in several networks and research projects.

In 2002 support was given to the Swedish South African Research Network on Music and Identity (SSARN). International workshops were held with funding from the Travelling Institute and finally we received a grant from the NRF-Sida fund “South African – Swedish research partnership programme bilateral agreement”. This made it possible for SSARN to organise a series of local and international seminars from 2004–2006 in order to broaden our perspectives and deepen our knowledge in the area of music and identity. Also, the hosting universities, namely Walter Sisulu University and the University of Stellenbosch, both in South Africa, and Göteborg University in Sweden, provided financial support for our meetings.

Publishing a book, out of experiences of the network, was a goal from the beginning. The book project called for further expertise and Professor Kofi Agawu, Princeton University, USA, and Professor Even Ruud, Oslo University, Norway, scrutinised texts and gave all writers clear-cut scholarly feedback. Professor Christine Lucia, Wits University, Johannesburg, South Africa, wrote a lucid introduction in order to place the subject in a wider research context. Undersigned Maria Smit did the extensive final editing in cooperation with the publishing house.

We are most grateful to all institutions and persons, who made the publication of the book possible. However, in the first place we want to thank all participants, who since 2002 have shared thoughts, ideas, and research through discussions and texts. Not all the essays produced during these years have found a place in this book, but they have given input to the network’s inspiring work.

For the Swedish South African Research Network (SSARN):

- Eric Akrofi, Walter Sisulu University, South Africa
- Maria Smit, Stellenbosch University, South Africa
- Stig-Magnus Thorsén, Göteborg University, Sweden

INTRODUCTION

Christine Lucia

The aim of the Swedish South African Research Network on Music and Identity, the project that came to fruition in this book, was to develop research discourses around music, identity, and culture, shared between two areas of the world: Sweden and South Africa. It was an ambitious aim that saw the project exploring, over several years, a number of theoretical and methodological issues, covering enormously divergent musical experiences, and developing research capacity among participants along the way. In the process, greater mutual understanding of socio-political and educational problems and research concerns across two continents was established than existed before. The project grew geographically, with the idea of “South Africa” expanding to include participants from Namibia, Kenya/US, and Ghana, while “Sweden” expanded to include participants from Denmark and Finland; eventually some participants from Australia also joined because of their interest in South African music. Like an intellectual touring vehicle, the project shifted gears, changed direction, and refined the reason for its journey along the way. This was reflected in changes in some participants’ offerings and in the way people dropped in and out. A core group of about twenty-odd people was established fairly early on, hence the twenty-three chapters of this book.

The original vision of the project was never lost: to study ways in which music articulates identity discourse in Nordic and African contexts, and to explore the interface between two very different parts of the global music-scape. Given the theoretical possibilities underpinning such aims and the fact that the people involved in making this book came from different aspects of music as a discipline (exemplified in the contrasting disciplinary modes of music education and cultural studies for example), it is inevitable that the book is not homogenous. It reflects the sum of its contributors rather than a single initiating concept or theme. It grew into maturity as a collection of ideas in ways that have left some areas of theory and methodology well explored while others are more implicit. Some issues are covered with greater thoroughness than others. The resulting sense of incompleteness is par for the course, however, because the recent history of these two areas of the world and the political change each has experienced (especially South Africa, whose transformation is a key element underpinning the contingent nature of arguments in this book), has not provided neat solutions, but

rather, has continually exposed new problems. That is what the book does too, then: it exposes fissures, weaknesses, uncertainties; and explores what at times seem like fragile relationships between countries, cultures, individuals, and institutions.

Identity is not examined in this book as a philosophical or historical concept so much as a manifestation of culture and nation: many chapters of this book concern themselves therefore – whether explicitly or not – with identity as an ideology, as an expression of selfhood and subjectivity asserting itself across a number of sites. In Adornian terms identity is itself the site that links a concept to its object, the “thing”. In this dialectic relationship identity is already an ideological phenomenon, a move outwards from what Frederic Jameson calls “the imprisonment of the self (Id) in itself”, where, “crippled by its terror of the new and unexpected, carrying its sameness with it wherever it goes [the self] never meets anything but what it knows already” (Jameson 2007, p. 16). The counter-image of the self, in this Freudian aspect of Adorno’s thought, is the utter newness and strangeness of “non-identity”, exposure to which in a constant dialectical relationship over time allows “what is left to be tolerable to experience, while it tirelessly reassures us that we really still do have a persistent identity over time” (p. 17), thus ensuring a sufficiency of sameness to become a “defense mechanism” (Ego) which can also be “a weapon, and instrument of praxis and survival” (Ibid).

This is only one kind of theoretical underpinning for identity, then, and it is an important one for this book. Identity study as a whole is a vast, indeed multiple area of scholarship producing a widely divergent literature, both non-fiction and fiction, and concerning itself with gender, race, the body, the community, the nation, and fundamental issues of repression and domination at all levels of society. The social construction of identity and its link to modernity is indeed one of the major thrusts of scholarly writing in the past fifteen or twenty years (see for example Giddens 1991). Identity is also a concrete reality in people’s daily lived experience, and issues raised in the literature have been linked in very specific ways to empirical data in humanities disciplines such as political science, sociology, psychology, history, anthropology, religious studies, and education. Music has its own specific links as well, and is sometimes seen as one of the cornerstones of identity formation, used as a site of observation by scholars in other disciplines, the “social immersion” of music being the very thing that makes it “obviously attractive for sociologists and, more recently, cultural theorists” (Williams 2003, p. 76).

Identity is intimately connected to performance, since music as cultural expression only exists in and through performance. The performance of culture is a major issue for music ethnographers – how people perform it, what that means, how societies and individuals frame, articulate, and own cultural identities – and there are numerous texts

that illustrate this (from this vast literature see for example Feld 1982). Music cultures often assert themselves in circumstances of internal or external exile or migration (see Erlmann 1996, Shelemay 1998 or Coplan 2001) or under the devastating circumstances of HIV/Aids in Africa (see Barz 2006). By extension, “performing identity” is a common theme in anthropological, ethnomusicological, and popular music discourse.

The way cultures, especially minorities, project identity musically, is also important to music educationists and educators in Europe and the Americas, where subjects are not only “there” to be studied as bearers of identity; they are also there to be taught. Questions of power immediately arise out of debates around multiculturalism in music education, as indeed they have done around questions of identity generally, especially in connection with colonised, minority, marginalised, or exiled peoples. The world-music recording industry and the cultural revivalist movements that both emerged in the 1980s provide clear indication of ways in which new identities are performed under the threat (or charm) of globalising powers, and before that several generations of challenges have been posed by the powerful forces of world exploration, cultural imperialism, religious evangelism, and political hegemony.

Musical identity is not only performed and projected, it is also produced in the sense of being composed and “written into” aspects of musical history traditionally known as work, genre and style. The process of composition engaged in by individual composers – not usually a social process and not ostensibly seeking to construct identity – is nonetheless partly a process of identity-formation in sound. The study of how works came to be written often reveals interesting disjunctures, too, between a work’s conception in sound and the identifications attributed to it afterwards through historical and political process (see for example Parker 1997). Even the close reading of a composer’s individual style over the course of his or her life can show sometimes marked changes in musical identity: one thinks for example of the profound differences between Stravinsky’s musical identity before and after 1952, or the sudden manifestations of “late style” as Edward Said (after Adorno) calls it, in composers such as Beethoven or Schoenberg, that provide moments “when the artist who is fully in command of his medium nevertheless abandons communication with the established social order [and] achieves a contradictory, alienated relationship with it [so that h]is late works constitute a form of exile” (Said 2006, p. 8).

Despite every effort at social engineering or political repression, music has a life of its own, travelling and miscegenating wantonly across borders and race/gender stereotypes – sometimes in ways that those trying to control it find hugely inconvenient. Music’s ability to float free is part of what allowed people to meet at a conference in Amsterdam in 1987 to imagine a post-apartheid “culture in another South Africa” – even though

that culture took several more years to achieve (see Campschreuer and Divendal, 1989). Music does this because it is an expression of people's deepest and most secret desires and feelings. It does not obey laws, is not required to carry a passport, and although it may be silenced externally through censorship – sometimes brutally, as Charles Hamm (1990), Michael Drewett (2005), and others have shown in relation to South Africa under apartheid – it continues *within* as part of the sound-core of peoples' being, so in one sense cannot be taken away from them. However, it also constantly changes its meanings within: the music we learned as a child takes on very different meanings fifty years later, and through every year in between.

Music within can thus be a wonderfully confusing space in people's psychologies, manifesting not only a mixture of cultural identities but also a constant state of conflict, one that continually has to be reconciled with what other people are listening to, and especially, what other people *want* us to listen to (as students or consumers for instance). Most music scholars would agree that there are few people in the world who grow up monoculturally, musically speaking. Because of radio, television, and internet we are all – at various levels and in extremely varied contexts – exposed to several musics from the moment we are born. And no two people are exposed in the same way, as studies in music psychology and music sociology have shown. Just as the methodology of case studies and sampling can seem only provisional and exploratory “[i]n a world of some six-billion people and possibly just as many compositions”, as Nishlyn Ramanna puts it in his study of South African jazz and identity (2005, p. 71), so musical identity globally can be said to have been constructed in at least 6 billion ways, of which only a handful are presented in this book.

One of the major things this book does, then, is to examine a few very specific circumstances under which musical identities in certain areas of the world at certain times have been constructed; it does not attempt to draw wider conclusions. The book also scrutinises the meanings such constructions hold for individuals and the societies in which they live. Another thing the book shows is how identities are manipulated: what happened in Ghana, for example, when an inherent multiculturalism encountered “colonial legacies like external music examinations, the playing of Western musical instruments, ballroom dance, choirs and bands ... resulting in the creation of vibrant music genres and cultures to service the musical identities of people in both countries”? (Akrofi and Flolu in this volume). What happens when a school music curriculum that favours one kind of music culture over another, is imposed upon such vibrancy? The imposed music is an imposed identity, and is bound to be rejected to some extent and in various ways, unless (as with organ transplants), the operation proceeds with the

greatest possible caution and the environment is sufficiently antiseptic – which rarely happens in the mayhem of most schools.

The project behind this book brought together music educationists, musicologists, and ethnomusicologists (although some of us are not quite sure where to place ourselves in this triad). At the surface level of content it is fairly easy to see which is which, and the way people's interests have overlapped is reflected in the way chapters are loosely grouped under the headings "concepts of identity", "music and discourse", and "musical encounters"; but these headings don't tell us what is going on at a deeper level.

There are a number of themes that weave strands through the book at this deeper level, and create resonances with each other, making the chapters less distinct and disparate than at first glance. One is the idea of "agency". Several writers consider how a community or stratum of society uses music – and perhaps could be even more effective in using it – to affect theirs and others' lives; and not only to proclaim who they are but to change the way others see them, even how they see themselves. Minette Mans for example ("Tourism and cultural identity: conservation or commodification?") discusses the relationship between identity and tourism, and the way that culture-bearers in Namibia can become agents in their own social and economic empowerment. Maria Smit ("Facilitating the formation of personal and professional identities of Arts and culture educators") tackles the multiple identities that teachers have to forge for themselves in the classroom using the curriculum as a tool for change. Stig-Magnus Thorsén shows in his chapter "Sweden in play with South Africa: personal musical experiences in postcolonial perspectives" how musicians relate to the identity of the "other" across cultures, using their agency to make changes in their music or their lives within the discourse of performance culture and government-aided development projects. In Christy Smith's chapter called "Re-identifying and auditory community: Worship in an Independent South African Church" it is the worshippers in a new non-denominational church in Johannesburg who take control of the musical environment, in a socially complex Christian world and one that is increasingly emerging throughout South Africa today.

Robin Stevens ("Tonic sol-fa: An exogenous aspect of South African musical identity") examines the way music was borne to Africa on a music notation system, tonic sol-fa, that was inimical to the way much indigenous music was practiced and performed, and the ways composers have used it to their advantage, turning a hegemonic colonial system into an opportunity for unique musical expression. Zoliswa Twani's chapter "The musicians behind bars: Can music help renew identities?" explores the use of music in prisons, where ostensibly the "panoptic" view that authorities have of inmates militates against agency, but in fact inmates use musical opportunities to skill themselves and

change their view of themselves as prospective citizens returning to society. Thembela Vokwana shows in his chapter “*Iph’indlela? Where is the way? Resurrecting an African identity through popular music in the post-apartheid South Africa*”, the struggle young urban musicians in South Africa have to express a new identity in the “new South Africa” that is free both from the past and from globalising influences.

Another major theme is the idea of “Africa” and its cultures, explored through several chapters: Eva Fock’s “*Djembe, darbuka or drum set in music school – cultural diversity in Scandinavian music education*”, the chapters by Mans and Thorsén, Jean Kidula’s “Identity dynamics in popular and religious music: Mary Atieno and the International Fellowship Church Choir (IFC)”, and Christine Lucia’s “Travesty of Prophecy? Views of South African Black Choral Composition”. Africa has been constructed since the first travellers wrote about it, as Kofi Agawu has shown (2003, Chapter 1). The discourse around what Africa means poses the greatest possibility for dialectic engagement with issues in a number of sites: the classroom, the church, the media, academia, and even the prison. And the way it is constructed, and by whom, revolves intimately around the very questions of identity and power with which this book is concerned.

It is not only Africa that is constructed: Sweden (in the context of this book) has also been, and there, as in South Africa, immigrant cultures struggle to assert themselves against the idea of nation and nationality they are expected to assimilate into. Andreas Engström (“Music and cultural identity among Kurdish musicians in Stockholm”) deals with this issue through a particular case study, while Patricia Opondo (“African music in global diasporic discourse: Identity explorations of South African artist Johnny Mbizo Dyani”) deals with it through the personal biography of an exiled South African jazz musician. Both show how people’s identities are not only maintained on “foreign” soil but also how their presence affects the communities around them. In a completely different context (POW camps) the idea of Italy is explored by Donato Somma in his chapter on “Music in the Italian prisoner of war camps in South Africa during the Second World War”. The Italy that prisoners constructed was so powerful that it has become a myth through which the Italian community in Johannesburg have continued to the present day to identify themselves. Nicholas Kofie and Eric Akrofi’s “The role of music in preserving the cultural identity of a migrant community: A case study of Duakor fishermen” tackles a similar issue within a small community on the West Coast of Ghana.

In music education and the church the philosophy of multiculturalism brings those in authority hard up against the “idea” of culture(s), and it is explored as both a practice and an ideology, in the chapters by Fock, Thorsén, Joseph, and Smith. Sometimes identities are constructed through discourse found in the media, as argued by Leif

Lorentzon in “Jazz in *Drum*, an ambiguous discourse: ‘Matshikeze’ and the short stories in the 1950s” and Tobias Pontara in “Constructing the relevant listener: Power, knowledge and the construction of identity in the discourse of musical autonomy”. Lorentzon takes a prominent magazine from 1950s South Africa and Pontara takes the writing found on a more recent record label, but both show how discourse is constructed in order to project a particular kind of identity to the reader, one that is not necessarily empowering or positive. The way discourse constructs identity is also dealt with in the chapters by Thorsén, Opondo, and Mans.

Some of these chapters look quite closely at music and its languages and forms to show how identity plays out in rhythm and sonority. The ways musical structure and material reflects cultural identity or even a certain resistance to changing identities are shown in the chapters by Kidula, Lucia, and Akrofi/Flolu, while Elsabe Kloppers’ “The hymnic identities of the Afrikaner”, traces the way traditions of psalm and hymn singing among Afrikaners have been used to consolidate identity in face of threats and a radically changing social order. Each author uses music analysis in a different way, and this too reflects to some extent the identity of the writer (as do all the approaches taken in this book).

Finally: there are several major sites for musical identity formation that are also fields of music research, and these are clearly articulated in this book. Most prominent among them is the school as a site of struggle and change, penetrated by several writers including Fock and Smit – and by two other writers: Sandie Malan (“Storytelling as mediator between worlds”), and Dawn Joseph (“Encountering South African Music from an Australian Perspective: A Kaleidoscopic Voyage of Discovery”) who describe very different kinds of new projects being tried out in the South African and Australian school systems. In Joseph’s case, the use of South African music in an Australian context raises strangely dislocating ideas about the local and global. James Flolu and Eric Akrofi on the other hand take a much larger view as they consider “The colonial influence on music education in Ghana and South Africa”.

The choir – including the church choir – is another site where identities are brought together, sometimes merge (sometimes not), and are expressed in terms of the dynamics of both relationships and repertoires. Nicol Hammond tackles problems in choral encounters in post apartheid South Africa in “Singing the nation: negotiating South African identity through choral music”, while Jan Hellberg looks at issues within the context of a church choir in “Why localise a church’s music? Musical change, meanings and cultural identities in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia”. Both take an ethnographic perspective, which is a methodology running through many of these

chapters, alongside archival and other methodologies, including participatory action research.

Gender and racial issues are not prominent among the titles of chapters but emerge in some of the threads of debate. However, Luvuyo Dontsa's "*Intonjane* music: A forum of identity formation for Xhosa women" does deal with gender directly, in relation to a detailed description of Xhosa cultural practice.

REFERENCES

- Agawu, K. 2003. *Representing African music: Postcolonial notes, queries, positions*. New York: Routledge.
- Barz, G. 2006. *Singing for life: HIV/Aids and music in Uganda*. New York: Routledge.
- Campschreuer, W. and J. Divendal (eds.) 1989. *Culture in another South Africa*. New York: Olive Branch Press.
- Coplan, D. 2001. *In the time of cannibals: The word music of South Africa's Basotho migrants*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.
- Drewett, M. 2005. Stop this filth: The censorship of Roger Lucey's music in apartheid South Africa. *South African Journal of Musicology: SAMUS* 25, 53–70.
- Erlmann, V. 1996. *Nightsong: Performance, power, and practice in South Africa*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Feld, S. 1982. *Sound and sentiment: Birds, weeping, poetics, and song in Kaluli expression*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania.
- Giddens, A. 1991. *Modernity and self-identity: Self and society in the late Modern Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Hamm, C. 1990. *Privileging the moment of reception: Music and radio in South Africa*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Jameson, F. 2007(1990). *Late Marxism: Adorno or the persistence of the dialectic*. London and New York: Verso.
- Parker, R. 1997. 'Va Pensiero' and the insidious mastery of song, in R. Parker, *Leonora's last act: Essays in Verdian discourse*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 20–41.
- Ramanna, N. 2005. Biography, taste, and identity construction in the production and reception of some contemporary South African jazz. *South African Journal of Musicology: SAMUS* 25, 71–82.
- Said, E. 2006. *On late style*. London: Bloomsbury.
- Shelemay, K. K. 1998. *Let jasmine rain down: Song and remembrance among Syrian Jews*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Williams, A. 2003(2001). Identities. In A. Williams *Constructing musicology*. Aldershot, Hampshire and Burlington, Vermont: Ashgate, 76–97.

An aerial photograph of a complex highway interchange, featuring a large 'X' shaped overpass structure. The image is heavily faded and has a warm, sepia-toned color palette. The text 'CONCEPTS OF IDENTITY' is centered over the image, with a thin black line extending horizontally from the left and vertically from the right, framing the text.

CONCEPTS OF IDENTITY

*IPH'INDLELA? WHERE IS THE WAY?*¹

Resurrecting an African identity through popular music in the post-apartheid South Africa²

Thembele Vokwana, University of South Africa

ABSTRACT

Upwards of a decade since the historic 1994 democratic elections, other struggles are still waged in South Africa in order to fully realise the promise of freedom for all sectors of the population. To harness and concretise such an ideal, music performance intersects with politics to transform the country towards a realisation of “Africanness” assumed to contain transformative and liberating possibilities. I ask: what role does music play in the formation and constant negotiation of a national psyche reflecting “Africanness”? How does music work in collaboration with other cultural goods and ideologies in forming and sustaining the identity(ies) under investigation here? Furthermore, what tensions are fomented by the invocation of such an identity over

¹ *Iph'indlela* is a Xhosa phrase meaning “Where is the way?”. Choirs and various marabi musicians popularized this in a folk song with a similar title that was often sung. In this essay, it is used to signify the “muddled” nature and tensions inherent in the discussions of African identity in South Africa at present and poses the question in a reflexive way that allows for productive thinking through complexities attached to identity making processes.

² I am thankful to the Swedish South African Research Network (SSARN) for supporting travel and conference participation in various stages of working on this chapter. Thoughtful commentary from SSARN participants shaped this final outcome. The Fulbright Organization and International Institute of Education, also funded travel to South Africa for final research on this project. Gratitude also goes to Puleng Segalo, Prof S Shole, Moemi Pitsi and Prof Mutasa for translation of Tswana, Afrikaans, and Shona song lyrics. Various informants, especially Kabelo Maja, Sihle Blöse, Jacob Lebeko, Nthabiseng Motsemme and Nokuthula Mazibuko were helpful in clarifying and lending insights on South African township culture. To Christine Lucia, Mark Slobin and Eric Charry I am most grateful for comments on earlier versions of this essay.

others in existence? By focusing on emergent musical styles such as *kwaito* and hip-hop, I hope to reveal the significant role played by black youths in the reformulation and development of a post-apartheid African identity in South Africa.

INGABULA ZIGCAWU:³ ON POST-APARTHEID IDENTITY POLITICS⁴

The South African democratic dispensation was rallied in with much fanfare and optimism. Evidently, its driving impetus was the desire to both instil and resurrect a new sensibility of unity and hope out of the ravages of the grim spectre of apartheid still fresh in most people's minds. As the apartheid legacy waned into the past, embracing and celebrating a sense of Africanness formed part of undoing the damage of the apartheid years. Apartheid, as a direct result of the colonial encounter, was largely instrumental in processes of erasure of the indigenous and by implication, African ways of life. Reclaiming heritage and identity indexes that the previous regime had attempted to erase might be read as both a gesture of triumph over apartheid, as well as a path towards healing. The post-apartheid discourse of celebrating Africanness, as I will attempt to show in the discussion to follow, became a means by which old identities were fractured and new ones formed. As much as the apartheid system is implicated in

³ *Ingabula zigcawu* literally means "to clear off the cobwebs". It is a Xhosa idiomatic expression for clearing the path prior to the major event. In this context, it is used to mean "an introduction" and also mapping out the context against which this discussion is based.

⁴ The appellation "African" has been deemed contentious in view of the democratic ideals on which the "new South Africa" is premised. For some, it seems to engender a black (indigenous African) constituency, thus leaving out those whose earliest origins are traced elsewhere in the world, such as White and Indian Africans. Notions of Africanness seem to have been fuelled by Mbeki's (1996) parliamentary address "I am an African" and sustained through the discourse of an African Renaissance. (For critical commentary on this discourse, see for example Farred, 2003; Maloka, 2001). The political and intellectual history of "Africanness/African Renaissance" can be traced and linked with movements such as Negritude and more recently Black Consciousness Movement, as well as political philosophies of organizations such as the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC). However, I do not suggest that current usages share any specific links with any of these political organizations and philosophical positions. Snail (1993) offers illuminating insights on the evolution of notions of Africanness within South Africa.

Contention on who *is* an African and what it *means* to be African has been particularly rife. Concerns have ranged from claims of reverse racism to ethnic based politics being used as a potentially divisive strategy posing a threat to the new democracy. As used in this chapter, "African" makes reference to indigenous black Africans solely for analytical purposes to illustrate specific points the discussion intends to highlight.

the ways in which black South Africans constructed individual and communal forms of self-knowledge in the past, the post-apartheid dispensation also lays claim to current forms of self-fashioning/stylisation and identity making processes.⁵

I argue that in both cases, identity-forming practices were sanctioned by the state, as well as cultivated by the populace at a grassroots level through creative practices of everyday life⁶. Specifically for this chapter, I intend to investigate and reflect upon the notion of an “African identity” as carved and articulated through a multi-layered interplay of popular music and other popular cultural practices in the post-apartheid dispensation. First, I make an attempt to define what an (African) identity might be and proceed to discuss its contentious nature, as well as its ramifications within the current social milieu in South Africa. As I will indicate later in the essay, any discussion of identity is always partial and negates definitive closure since the very notion of identity and the processes utilised in identification entail an ongoing, multifaceted project.

Numerous scholars with widely divergent theoretical, methodological, and interpretive modes have variously theorised identity. Evidence in support of this assertion can be found in the various disciplinary enclaves laying claim to studying identity. Psychologists, sociologists, philosophers, political scientists and historians, gender and sexuality scholars all dissect the vast corpus of identity with unrelenting consistency⁷. Viewed broadly, scholarship on identity reflects an enmeshment of theoretical positions and definitions that highlight it first as an individual sense of self. This definition pinpoints the internal and subjective dimension of identity. Proceeding from that, identity theorists also emphasise positionality of an individual within a group and outline a definition that encompasses a complex interplay of “intra”- and “inter”-group dynamics. Terms such as ingroups, outgroups, subcultures come to the fore. In each case, for individuals and groups to have a sense of who they are, narratives of similarity and difference with those they encounter spatially and temporally are constructed.

⁵ See Motsemme (2002) and Nuttall (2004) for a productive engagement with some of the challenges and processes of self-fashioning/stylization in the production of new identities in the post-apartheid period.

⁶ A comparative study of government cultural policies and practices in both regimes might yield illuminating insights in this regard. This is beyond the scope of this discussion though. For supporting documentation, see the *White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage* (1996) especially the emphasis on indigenous cultural forms as central to both human rights realization and identity formation.

⁷ For extensive, by no means exhaustive discussions on identity, see Alcoff and Mendieta, 2003; Capozza and Brown, 2000; Hall, 1993; Hebdige, 1987; Sanchez-Mazas and Klein, 2003; Tajfel and Turner, 1986, among numerous scholars.

Evidently, investigative forays into identity require an awareness of its complex constitution as something that is “real” in its outward ramifications embodied in observable behaviour, and also transient and fluid and therefore, never fixed, particularly because of its location within individual subjectivities across widely divergent spatialities and temporalities. Furthermore, identity can be something ascribed from without as much as it is formed and projected from within. This means, groups and individuals alike carve, maintain, and even reject identities through being named by others and also naming themselves. Individuals or groups highlight aspects common to them in order to cement a sense of belonging. Often biology (such as skin colour or gender), cultural traits (e.g. modes of dress, creative production, religious affiliation) and shared space and historical experience etc. are used.

Finding a definitive theory and methodology for engaging with identity is beyond the scope of this discussion. That said, my theoretical thrust is invigorated and sharpened by Sanchez-Mazas and Klein’s (2003) theorising and understanding of social identities. According to them, social identities are articulated “from different angles while converging towards a conceptualisation [of self that is] *non essentialised and inherently linked with action*” [p. 2, emphasis in the original]. Using this formulation as a starting point, I argue that “identities are not only defined cognitively, they are [also] embedded and constructed in action” (Sanchez-Mazas and Klein 2003, p. 4). Furthermore, I am particularly indebted to Hall’s notion of an “imaginative rediscovery” (1996, p. 393), in identity formation, a process in my view, that always entails a backward gaze into history and tradition and recuperating from that store of images, knowledge and signifying practices that imbue the present with a sense of being, in this case, “African”. A close reading of writing on identity theorising reveals an agency closely linked with political urgency (Alcoff, 2000; Alcoff and Mendieta, 2003; Cabral, 1993). A coupling of these various theoretical positions will attempt to account for the fact that notions of an African identity are mostly an imaginative recuperating of indigenous cultures and those moments in black South African history, which have been accorded significance, such as the Sophiatown epoch. Practically, this sense of self within the black community finds its articulation in a broad spectrum of artistic products and signs as will be discussed below. All these capture and magnify a specific moment and sensibility that foregrounds “Africanness” in unique, yet widely divergent, and instructive ways.

Popular music, especially the township genre called *kwaito*⁸ will receive a central focus in this discussion. In its articulation, circulation and reception, *kwaito* operates in

⁸ *Kwaito* is a music genre that has been popularized by black youth in South Africa from the mid 1990s. Stylistically, it borrows from American rap, hip-hop and house music with the

mutual entanglements with visual culture, especially locally produced films such as *Yizo-Yizo*; language, more so local vernaculars and their related creoles (*isicamtho/ tsotsi taal*⁹), space and place, the township (*ikas/ekasi*¹⁰), as well as a sense of collective memory and history.

Through this discussion, I also intend to reveal the often oppositional and at times interwoven genealogies of popular music, which, when viewed together, become operational in discourses of claiming and foregrounding Africa in current identity politics. The methodology applied involves a discussion of lyrical content of songs and discursive practices applied in music video as indexical icons signifying the conception and performance of an African identity.

South African black popular music is an urban product. Its rise is linked to the tensions of industrialisation, displacement and adaptation of black people in the urban landscapes. It is these tensions that have been productive of the diversity of cultural production experienced in South Africa both in the past and at present hence the focus on “the city” in the following section. I use the category “the city” as a generic term that makes reference to Durban and especially Johannesburg¹¹, two industrial metropolises that provided South Africa with the variety of popular and neo-traditional music forms to which reference will be made in the discussion to follow.

pace slowed down and generally sung/chanted in local languages. Instrumental backing is often through synthesizers.

⁹ *Isicamtho* also called *tsotsi/township taal* is a creole that developed in the townships. In its varieties, it assembles Afrikaans, English and most of the languages spoken by black people in South Africa, especially isiZulu, isiXhosa, SeSotho and SeTswana. Furthermore, it is marked by creativity and linguistic conventions that are not wholly bound to the syntactic and semantic logics of any of these languages. Molamu (2003) offers a more theoretically informed discussion on this subject. Sosibo (2005) goes further to identify differences between *isicamtho* and *tsotsi-taal*.

¹⁰ *Ikasi* is a noun meaning “the township”. The “e” in *ekasi* is a locational affix as in the preposition “at/in” [the] township.

¹¹ Durban and Johannesburg have well document histories of genres such as *isicathamiya* and *maskanda*, *kwela*, *marabi* and *mbaqanga*. Other metropolitan centers have also been important in the development of music. Mention needs to be made of Queenstown, Kimberly, East London, Cape Town and Port Elizabeth. Their contribution is particularly in the production of Afro-jazz.

THE CITY AND THE UN-/REMAKING OF TRADITION

Rural displacement of people in the previous century and continued rural-urban influx have accorded South Africa's metropolises an important status in the development and self-fashioning of black cultural identity (Marks and Rathbone, 1982). Modernity and the rampant rise in industrialisation in South African cities entailed massive influx of the previously rural African populace to the growing towns, which eventually became nodal points for rural-urban migratory patterns. At once the city is seen as a transient space by the migrant workers, a jungle alien and alienating to them, often with no moral mores and a sense of tradition. (See for instance Dikobe (1973)). The anti-tradition position of the city often fosters forms of rehearsals of "home" and traditional culture of the rural hinterland. Somewhat ironically, the invocation of tradition also aided the apartheid project of using tribalism and heritage to effect the divide and rule policies that sustained this ideology

Some members of the black Intelligentsia and urban people in spatial locations such as Sophiatown held radically different views from those articulated through the ideology of apartheid and its tropes of culture and heritage that sustained its existence. "Anti-tradition" genres such as various forms of African jazz found their strongest expression and celebration here. For some practitioners of this music, looking to America was a way of expressing international cosmopolitanism that went against the "kraal" mentality apartheid wanted to entrench.¹²

The irony of the apartheid ideology was the enmeshment of the erasure and silencing of black identity, history, and heritage on the one hand, while simultaneously appropriating these to justify its practices. Tribalism, tradition, and culture were invoked to justify separate development and the homeland system. The underlying narrative was that of encouraging black people to live according to their means and norms. Implicit in this policy was the plan to locate black people outside urban modernity while "civilising" them just enough to exploit their labour in the growing industrial cities. Left on their devices, black people could develop in accordance with their cultural norms far from the view of the white urban dweller. Their self fulfilment and actualisation could only be possible when they perform their music, rituals and forms of exchange in the rural

¹² Ballantine (1993); Erlman (1991) and numerous other scholars reveal notable insights on the reception of popular music among black South Africans in the urban cities on the one hand, and also the specific class tensions that arose with the conscious effort to revive rural, indigenous traditions in the urban centers. See also Allen (1993) and Nixon (1994) for the significance of looking to America as a device for musical and identity production in these locations.

hinterland of the South African nation state, so went the logic of apartheid's take on culture and tradition. Partly, this may account for the ambivalent relationship young urban musicians have had with traditional music in the past, an aspect that probably spilled over to the rest of the youth in other spaces too. Traditional music performance seems to have been used by the apartheid regime to arrest the development of black South Africans. However, some musicians thrived on promoting and performing traditional and neo-traditional musical forms.

Barber (1997) notes and comments on the manner in which urban popular forms are strongly implicated in the dance of power with hegemonic rules meted out by modernity. In the process of exertion of hegemonic controls over these forms, new forms of identity, imagining and meaning evolve. The same cannot be downplayed for black popular arts in the urban centres in South Africa. As rural migrant workers settled in the city, neo-traditional musical forms that developed, found a strong resurgence in musical productions of most young musicians of the post-apartheid era. Evidently the city has hitherto played a significant role in the production of forms of imagining and imaging what it means to be a modern African. Often such forms of signification are contentious, dialogic, and constantly adapting to spatial and temporal realities in South Africa. I must caution though that the tensions between "tradition" and "modernity" as used in developing black popular art forms were somewhat downplayed by reality where instances of fusion and hybridisation occurred. A constant symbiotic relationship, which marked musical styles produced in South Africa's urban centres, has always existed with varying degrees of success. Muller (2004) appropriately calls black South African music "traditions in transformation" precisely because of all these networks of mutual influence.

While this chapter is less steeped in exploring reception histories of black popular music, nevertheless, it is worthwhile to reveal how certain tropes of "tradition" that have been rejected in the past, presently reveal themselves within the projects that celebrate an African Renaissance in the post-apartheid context. Manifestations of resurgence of "tradition" can be observed in how current popular music groups use as stylistic devices various forms of traditional genres. Busi Mhlongo in the remixes of her album *Urban Zulu* ([1999] 2005) fuses *maskanda*¹³ with house beats and rhythms and generally

¹³ *Maskanda* is one of the neo-traditional music styles often associated with rural Zulu music traditions or music of working class migrant workers (see Coplan, 2002; Davis, 1994; Olsen, 2000). It would be highly inappropriate to place Busi Mhlongo within the current crop of young musicians. Her significance in this discussion is important in so far as it reveals how her *Urban Zulu* album has made a traditional genre (*maskanda*) hip among club goers. I have had occasion to witness how the song *Yaphel'imali yam* often played alongside *Kwaito*, hip-

presents it as a creative foundation for her artistic production. From the younger generation, Boom Shaka (1999), a *kwaito* group, through an interesting collaboration with the *maskanda* artist Ihash'elimhlophe, also references traditional cultural forms. In the accompanying video to the song *Hlanganani*, traditionally clad Zulu dancers “clear up the space” for performance and disseminating the message in their song by invoking traditional forms of ensuring order in traditional court meetings – *imbizo*. The antiphonal chant “*ayihlale phants'ibambumthetho*” (be seated and maintain order) is usually associated with instances in village meetings, wherein the leader, during a public address, has his aides call for order from the audience. In the video (Boom Shaka, 1999), the elderly performer, Ihash' elimhlophe, leads the call while the rest of Boom Shaka members provide the response. While this group made its mark early in the history of *kwaito*, its usage of the overt forms of Zulu traditions within a current and fashionable popular music frame seems to advocate a bridge between black urban and rural contexts and forge a space in which post-apartheid urban youths can take pride in appropriating traditional music forms in the same breadth as they do *kwaito*. A coupling of previously tension laden binaries: tradition and modernity, rural and urban invite the auditing public towards a new reading of these as signs indexing emergent ways of looking at and assimilating African experience in the post-apartheid era; the coexistence of the old and new in mutually beneficial co-relationships.

Another popular group, Skwata Kamp¹⁴ employs similar strategies through hip-hop. An award winning group with a large youth following, Skwata Kamp's repertoire presents a *mélange* of South African languages to achieve a variety of creative effects. In the song *Umoya* (Mkhukhu Funkshen, 2004), there is an invocation of traditional oratory to convey both a politically charged message, as well as self-praise, both aspects very much a prevalent feature of indigenous poetic traditions *izibongo*. In the song *Umoya*, a male narrator, employing highly idiomatic language, recites a series of lines announcing the “presence/might” of this group as a musical force to be reckoned with and perhaps even

hop and house music in Pretoria, Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town clubs, elicits as much frenzy and appreciation as leading hits in the genres I have highlighted.

¹⁴ This group's name reveals an interesting relation with low class, urban periphery slum dwellings. *Skwata* is a transliteration of the word “squatter” used to denote both vagrants and people who occupy land illegally and develop unmonitored and unplanned settlements often in municipal owned land. Such dwellings are generally called Squatter Camps. This is yet a reflection on how this group aligns itself with grassroots, landless people movements, these having been among strong critics of government's non services delivery to South Africa's poor. This point ties in with the notion of musical groups taking the role of “social commentator” such as *iimbongi* of old did.

a veiled allusion to the political urgency of their lyrics which will shake and unsettle those to whom the lyrics are directed, especially those in power. The mode of delivery and the cadence of the chanting bear relationship with *izibongo*, as well as rap:

*Kwasuka loko iizinja zikhal'umwabu
Indod'zokhaful'igwebu, Ikhoth'eyikhothayo
Engay'khothiyo ikhahlel'umlomo ...*

*Sthath'ugologo, 24/7 siyawuchitha
Sithatha le rap siy'buysel'emuv'ebantwini
Zothol'elokshini nabantwan'amabeshini ...*

Interestingly too, a blending of isiZulu and *isicamtho* in delivering the message is used. (Later in the discussion, the significance of the code switching will be highlighted and discussed in greater detail.)

Currently, as a form of self-fashioning, both the rural and urban, the traditional and modern seem as valid forms that express the diverse, yet unitary forms that constitute post-apartheid black identities and assert a collective consciousness of black history. In each of the examples discussed, the city and the rural hinterland are not placed in an oppositional and binary relationship. Instead, both are presented as framing a unique vision that articulates the collective black experience constructed in the cultural flows between the city and the rural areas in the past and at present. Accounting for the use of remixing Mahlathini and Mahotella Queens' *mbaqanga* song in the BOP's chart topping song *Meropa*, DJ Oskindo states,

I mean the youth didn't even know who is Mahlathini until we did the re-mix and they said wooh, we didn't know we had a musician like this. We've also gone down in the rural areas, working with maskandi musicians in KwaZulu Natal. We've worked with an artist called Hahlimhlope, we brought him in, and we made it more urban but not losing those elements. And that type of music, the youth used to look at it and say no it's for the rural people not for us urban people, they didn't want to be associated with it. But once we did it and we made it more urban they are like really wow, we didn't know we've got such musicians. Instead of embracing the overseas stuff, like being crazy about hip hop, now they are beginning to embrace our culture, which I think in the long run that, is where the future is at (The kwaito story: online – emphasis added).

Progressing from this viewpoint, in the next section, I use the focal lens of township culture, *ilokishi*, *ikasi*, or the ghetto as a framework of analysis and discussion. Previously I zoomed into the merging of the rural and urban, old and new and how this gets celebrated in new and transformed contexts. Extending from that I explore how the

unique and highly segregated urban morphology aimed at racial division embodies historical marks that currently hold significance for celebrating an African identity.

“HOLA 7¹⁵ CULTURE”: LANGUAGE, SPATIALITY, AND THE DEMOCRATISATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN POPULAR CULTURE

Extending the notion of post-apartheid as both a negotiation and engagement with the legacy of apartheid, I want to reveal how emergent music styles have tended to proceed with this project. The early years of *kwaito* saw it receiving vehement criticism for its apolitical position. Stevens (2000, p. 263) makes an apt observation in pinpointing how this new genre was a celebration “without having to engage with any socio-political discourse in the verbal text”. However, since then, *kwaito* has transcended its apolitical quality, shifted scope and focus over the past ten years to engage with democracy and its ideals in very productive and interesting ways. Subsequently, it has promoted meaningful and productive roles for black youths in pointing the way towards a truly “African” South Africa.

As already alluded to, post 1994 debates mostly centred around vehement criticism of how the materialism of current youths, seemingly promoted by American consumer culture in the wake of globalisation, betrayed the spirit of the 1976 “young lions”¹⁶.

¹⁵ Hola 7 is a form of greeting, with “Hola” possibly being directly taken from Spanish. While in Spanish the “H” is silent, among black South Africans, probably because of Nguni linguistic influence, the “H” is sounded, but not aspirated.

It is not quite clear what the 7 stands for. Conflicting, yet insightful information ranges between 7 representing a type of a folding knife township male youths used to carry. Its brand name was Okapi. The 7 might come from the fact that when half folded the resultant shape resembles the figure 7. Bonginkosi Dlamini (the *kwaito* star known as Zola) popularized this form of greeting through his TV show, Zola 7. Incidentally, Zola is the name of the locale in which he grew up. Known for its violence and criminal activities, Zola is a section of SOWETO (South Western Township) outside of Johannesburg, a reserve for black people as they were forcibly removed out of Sophiatown and other places designated for White settlement by the apartheid government.

¹⁶ 1976 is a watershed in the intensity of the struggle against apartheid. This is the year where, on June 16, school children took to the streets to protest the forced usage of Afrikaans as a language of education in the country. These riots faced massive army and police brutality and a significant number of youths were shot dead or imprisoned. In its aftermath, some were forced to exile. The legacy of this event still receives national importance and commemoration in the country at present.

Afrikaans is South African vernacular descendent form Dutch and highly developed by National Party intellectuals. The National Party was the political party of mostly Afrikaners

Furthermore, pervasive images of violent crimes in the townships saw a flight of those who could afford housing away from the wasteland and traumas of the ghetto to the safe and upmarket spaces of suburbia. Public debates in the media lamented the post-apartheid flight of youths from the townships/"*ekasi*" to the suburbs. While benefiting from the fruits of the newly found freedom to settle at any place of choice in the democratic state, the backlash against this flight posited that framing township as degenerate and unsafe space not to be inhabited by the economically able gave no credence to the values on which the struggle was based. It seemed, the newly upwardly mobile youth and the art forms they consumed (often Euro-American) were turning their backs on the locus of the struggle and urban Africanness. Subsequently, accusations flew on the betrayal of the ideals of the Freedom Charter¹⁷ and the very *raison d'être* of the anti-apartheid struggle. Emergent post-apartheid art forms such as *kwaito* were also denounced as not having any loyalty towards Africa.

This stigmatisation of *kwaito* was to be short lived. Various artists began to court politics through vehement commentary on the realities faced by the majority of people in the post-apartheid dispensation. Popular music began to function once again as both entertainment and a critical public sphere. Various manifestations of this position can be unpacked and subjected to critical scrutiny. I begin by discussing language as one way in which popular music was repoliticised and at the same time accorded privilege to African sensibilities. Linguistic expression is an important tool in identity formation and a creation of a sense of communal pride. In fact, where repression has been rife, language is a first tool used by current authorities to erase both individual and national memories of the colonised and repressed subjects. Ngugi (1986) lends support to the centrality of the vernaculars in asserting a strong sense of ethnic and /or national identity. In his view, one of the paths to be followed towards freedom is to negate the colonising intentions of the imperial powers by giving voice and expression to the vernacular. He notes how, after the gains of political and legislative freedom, the process of decolonisation of the mind holds prime importance for post-liberation subjects. Narration and encoding of individual histories and senses of nationhood are often best articulated through the vernaculars.

(Afrikaans speakers) that took control of the South African nation state in 1948 and its leaders were responsible for planning and implementing the entire machinery of apartheid.

¹⁷ In 1955, the African National Congress (ANC) developed a comprehensive blueprint of what the struggle was all about and what a democratic South Africa would entail. This document was called The Freedom Charter.

Specifically in the case of South Africa, the primacy given to local vernaculars has a political determination and significance since apartheid rendered unofficial all the vernaculars. In the post-apartheid setting, all languages are constitutionally official. *Kwaito* musicians responded to the language issue in often creative and interesting, yet politically charged, ways. I have already highlighted the manner in which ethnic identities were pitted against one another by the apartheid regime for purposes of divide and rule, while collectively, these were languages outside accorded an unofficial status. Current urban youths claimed the usage of their vernaculars in their music genres with a force that had not been evident in earlier generations, except perhaps for those genres that invoked tradition in overt ways. Most musicians inverted the authority of apartheid through a code switching that celebrated the diversity of people in the townships rather than specifically targeting one distinct language group, as was the case in the past. Through code switching within the vernaculars, youths seemed to be resisting the discourses of ethnicity that had brutalised the townships in the last days of apartheid. Bongo Maffin's *The Way Kungakhona* (Bongolution, 2002) is one such example. It opens with a chanting of lines in Shona by a male rapper, only to be followed by an impassioned poetic/rap rendition in SeTswana, the female vocalist singing in isiXhosa and SeSotho. Also weaved into this validation of Africanness through language usage is the reactionary move to destigmatise and relocate the township *lingua franca*, *isicamtho* from marginality to the centre stage. As the township youth have been instrumental in the making of the new democratic dispensation, relocating *isicamtho* to the centre of public discursive circuits once again accords privilege to an expressive medium with distinct roots within the African terrain. This is attested to by the musicians from the hip-hop group *Skwata Kamp* for instance, who claim that their preference for the "township language" is largely motivated by the fact that they deal with the realities of the people in the townships and would rather make their mark spreading these realities in those languages. A similar sentiment is voiced by various artists interviewed by Aryan Kaganof (See The kwaito story: online).

The music video is yet another terrain on which the struggle for African affirmation has been waged. Within this medium, I want to focus on how the narrative of space is foregrounded in the visual representation of *ikasi*. The township has been instrumental in the production of modern black identities and history in South Africa. While the townships were initially developed as reserves for temporary sojourn for black people who could not live elsewhere in the urban areas due to the Group Areas Act and segregation laws, these locations have borne the struggles through which African people have journeyed in the past. Through narrative strategies embodied in the *mise-en-scène* of current visual cultures such as the music video, an affirmation of this historical space

is made. Together with other forms of media such as fashion in labels like *Loxion Kulcha*¹⁸ the township and its distinct material culture is gradually receiving wider and more positive media coverage. In discussing hip-hop in Cape Town, Battersby (2003) notes how the image of the ghetto is a representation of a form of radical blackness that turns back the stigma of segregation to those who created it. By representing the ghetto, popular musicians are celebrating their heritage and resilience against the potentially destructive forces behind the creation of the ghetto, while also drawing attention to the ravages of poverty in these spaces. Scholarship on space and place foregrounds the importance of considering the significance of how individuals and groups identify with familiar domestic geographies for self-affirmation and group affiliation (Cohen, 1998; Leyshon *et al*, 1998; Whiteley *et al*, 2005). New songs are composed and can be used to delineate a space for a particular group. Similarly, certain songs linger in people's memory precisely because they embody a history and act as mnemonic devices for remembering spaces occupied. It is through this geography of emotions and aesthetics that people can gather around a remembrance of a particular locale in occasions of being uprooted from their land (Bondi *et al*, 2005). Visualising the ghetto and praising it in songs such as Zola's *Ghetto Fabulous* (Umdlwembe, 2002) is an important way *kwaito* musicians turn the discourse of the township as a wasteland to the township as home, imbued with humanistic qualities of sociality.

Current music offerings also reference music that came from the golden era of Sophiatown, a peri-urban ghetto predating the apartheid regime's Group Areas Act. The resurgence of this space and its culture in popular media inserts another important trajectory of black history. By referencing artists of the 1950s and earlier, current popular musicians seem to be paying homage to those artists whose music often resisted and predated the onset of apartheid. As most of them were exiled, apartheid seemed to have partially erased the history of Sophiatown, as music produced there was not even constantly featured in the apartheid media portal Radio Bantu. Borrowings and collaboration with living Sophiatown musicians by young artists such as Thandiswa Mazwai with Hugh Masekela (*Thanayi*, Sixty, 1999), Mafikizolo (*Kwela-Kwela*, Kwela, 2003), Malaika (Vuthelani, 2005) make genres such as *kwela* and *marabi* present and alive again for the current youth to partake of the celebration of their African heritage. Once again, post-apartheid youth culture establishes allegiance and continuities with production from one of the most productive eras in black creative output in South Africa.

¹⁸ Bogatsu (2002) provides an interesting discussion on the emerging importance of the "location/township culture" and the significance of the brand "*loxion kulcha*" (a play on the word Location Culture – location [*lokshini*] being another name for the townships)

At the base of these changes in representation through popular music are independent production houses owned or at least managed by young Africans. Some of the managers and producers in these independent recording studios have been raised in the townships and identify similarly with the musicians they represent. Ownership and control of production by people with an inside knowledge of the music is yet another indicator of the strides taken in uplifting black South Africans and encourage self-affirming practices in the new democracy.

CONCLUSION

In this essay, I have tried to grapple with the highly contentious and fluid notions of “identity”, “Africanness and blackness”, “culture” and “post-apartheid” South Africa. While I am aware of the highly problematic connotations these terms set up, that does not preclude one from engaging and interrogating their diverse set of meanings. In the discussion, I have entered into dialogue with other commentators on culture and identity in the new South Africa. For most, the intention is to capture through discursive forms, the unfolding spirit of celebration, cultural production and also tensions marking the transitional period from apartheid hegemony to the ideal of a democratic present.

The basic thrust of the discussion made has been to illustrate the agency of black youths in actualising democratic citizenship in celebrating aspects of their heritage through creative means. I have highlighted popular music as an integral variable in creating and sustaining networks of individual and group identities. The youth at the moment can be seen as embarking on projects that resist the neo-colonisation epitomised by global cultural networks on the one hand, and also the erasure of their African identity by the remnants of the apartheid legacy. If democratic ideals mean that all are equal before the law, and that the previously marginalised are given voice to speak in their own tongues, then music becomes an important site of struggle and also a vehicle to profess an African identity in the post-apartheid dispensation.

The foregoing discussion simply marks trends and opens up possibilities for further research and further critical investments to investigate African identity formation and projection in South Africa today. Pertinent questions that might be asked might include: how does an African identity embrace those whose roots are not in Africa but partakes fully in the current democracy? And if African identity, as this discussion seems to suggest, is marked by indexical icons with a direct history to the country’s immediate past, how might Africans who are diasporic subjects in the “new South Africa” participate in this assertion of African identity? As can be expected, these questions will

not be addressed here as that is beyond this chapter's purview. However, their relevance might not be discarded as they complicate the view of identity I have thus far discussed.

REFERENCES

- Alcoff, L. M. 2000. Who's afraid of identity politics, in P. Moya and M. Hames-Garcia (eds.), *Reclaiming identity: Realist theory and the predicament of postmodernism*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Alcoff, L. M. and Mendieta, E. (eds.) 2003. *Identities: Race, class, gender, and nationality*. Malden, MA. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing.
- Allen, L. V. 1993. *Pennywhistle kwela: A musical, historical and socio-political analysis*. Unpublished MMus thesis. Durban: University of Natal.
- Ballantine, C. 1993. *Marabi nights: Early South African jazz and vaudeville*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.
- Barber, K. 1997. *Readings in African popular culture*. Bloomington, Ind: International African Institute in association with Indiana University Press; Oxford: James Currey.
- Battersby, J. 2003. Sometimes it feels like I'm not Black enough: Recast(e)ing Coloured through South African hip-hop as a postcolonial text. In H. Wasserman and S. Jacobs (eds.), *Shifting Selves: Post-Apartheid essays on mass media, culture and identity*. Cape Town: Kwela Books.
- Bogatsu, M. 2002. "Loxion Kulcha": Fashioning Black Youth Culture in Post Apartheid South Africa. *English Studies in Africa*. 45(2), 1–12
- Bondi, L., Davidson, J., and Smith, M. (eds.) 2005. *Emotional geographies*. London: Ashgate.
- Cabral, A. 1993. National liberation and culture, in P. Williams and L. Chrisman (eds.), *Colonial discourse and post-colonial theory – a reader*. New York: Harvester-Wheatsheaf.
- Capozza, D. and Brown, R. (eds.) 2000. *Social identity processes*. London, Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage Publications.
- Cohen, S. 1998. Sounding out the city: Music and the sensuous production of place. In A. Leyshorn, D. Mattess and G. Revill (eds.), *The place of music*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Coplan, D. 2002. Sounds of the "third way": Zulu maskanda, South African popular traditional music. In M. Palmberg and A. Kirkegaard (eds), *Playing with identities in contemporary music in Africa*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.
- Davis, N. 1994. The guitar in Zulu maskanda tradition. *The World of Music*. 36, 118-137.
- Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology. White paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage, http://www.dac.gov.za/white_paper.html [Date of Access: 12 May 2006].
- Dikobe, M. 1973. *The Marabi nights*. London: Heinemann.
- Erlmann, V. 1991. *African stars: Studies in Black South African performance*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Farred, G. 2003. The "African Renaissance" at the crossroads of postcoloniality and postmodernity. *Contours: A journal of the African diaspora*, 1(1), 1–16.

- Hall, S. 1993. Cultural identity and diaspora. In P Williams and L Chrisman (eds), *Colonial discourse and post-colonial theory – a reader*. New York: Harvester-Wheatsheaf.
- Hebdige, D. 1987. *Cut ‘n mix: Culture, identity and Caribbean music*. London; New York: Methuen.
- Leyshon, A, Mattess, D, Revill, G (eds.) 1998. *The place of music*. New York: The Guilford Press.
- Maloka, E T. 2001. The South African “African Renaissance” Debate: A critique. *Polis* 8, (Special issue), <http://www.polis.sciencespobordeaux.fr/vol8ns/maloka.pdf> [Date of Access: 10 May 2006].
- Marks, S and Rathbone, R. 1982. *Industrialization and social change in South Africa: African class formation, culture, and consciousness, 1870–1930*. New York: Longman.
- Mbeki, T. 1996. “I am an African”. Parliamentary Address. Cape Town.
- Molamu, L. 2003. *Tsotsitaal: A dictionary of the language of Sophiatown*. Pretoria: Unisa Press.
- Motsemme, N. 2002. Yfreedom – Nthabiseng Motsemme on Blackness in Post Apartheid South Africa. *Wiser in Brief*, Newsletter of the Wits Institute for Social and Economic Research 1, no 2: Wits University.
- Muller, C. 2004. *South African Music: A century of traditions in transformation*. Santa Barbara, CA.: ABC-CLIO.
- Ngugi, wa Thiong’o 1986. *Decolonising the mind: The politics of language in African literature*. London: James Currey, Nairobi: Heinemann.
- Nixon, R. 1994. *Homelands, Harlem, and Hollywood: South African culture and the world beyond*. New York: Routledge.
- Nuttall, S. 2004. Stylizing the self: The Y generation in Rosebank, Johannesburg. *Public Culture* 16 (3), 430–452.
- Olsen, K. 2000. “Making Time”: Discourses on identity provision in contemporary maskanda. Paper presented at “Playing with identities in contemporary music in Africa: A Research Conference”. 19–22 October, Turku, Åbu, Finland.
- Sanchez-Mazas, M. and Klein, O. 2003. Social identity and citizenship: Introduction to the Special Issue, *Psychologica Belgica*. 43–1/2, 1–8.
- Sosibo, K. 2005. Kasi style. <http://www.chico.mweb.co.za/art/2005/2005sept/050909-kasi.html> [Date of access: 30 April 2006]
- Stevens, S. 2000. Kwaito. In S. Nuttall and C. Michaels (eds.), *Senses of culture: South African culture studies*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press.
- Snail, M.L. 1993. *The antecedents and the emergence of the Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa – its ideology and organization*. München: Akademischer Verlag.
- Tajfel, H. and Turner, J. C. 1986. The social identity theory of intergroup behaviour. In S. Woidel and L. W. Austin (eds), *Psychology of intergroup relations*. Chicago: Nelson-Hall.
- The kwaito story: Oscar Mdlongwa (DJ Oskido) interviewd by Aryan Kaganof.* <http://kaganof.com/kagablog/category/sharp-sharp-the-kwaito-story>. [Date of Access: 30 April 2006].
- Whiteley, S., Bennett, A. and Hawkins, S. (eds.) 2004. *Music, space and place: Popular music and cultural identity*. Aldershot: Ashgate.

White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage. http://www.dac.gov.za/white_paper.htm [Date of Access: 12 May 2006].

Discography

Boom Shaka. 1999. "Hlanganani". Boom Shaka, ft "Ihash'elimhlophe". Bula Music. CD Bula 052

Bongolution. 2002. "The Way Kungakhona". Bongo Maffin. Lightyear. CDCOL8159

Kwela. 2003. "Kwela-Kwela". Mafikizolo, ft Hugh Masekela. Sony South Africa. CDCOL 8243

Sixty. 1999. Hugh Masekela ft Thandiswa Mazwai. "Thanayi". Sony Music. CDCOL8086

Vuthelani. 2005. Malaika. Heita Records, CDHEITA 011

Mkhukhu Funkshen. 2004. "Umoya"; "Building Castles". Skwata Kamp. Gallo South Africa. CDGURB051

Umdlwembe. 2002. "Ghetto Fabulous". Zola. Ghetto Ruff Records. CDGRUF 019

Urban Zulu. [1999] 2005. "Yaphel'imali Yam". Busi Mhlongo. MELT 2000. BW2118

SINGING THE NATION: NEGOTIATING SOUTH AFRICAN IDENTITY THROUGH CHORAL MUSIC¹

Nicol Claire Hammond, University of the Witwatersrand

ABSTRACT

South Africa's socio-political history, and its present position within world and regional politics, make it a complex space within which young South Africans must negotiate their identities. The university choir provides a productive space for the examination of the politics of identity formation within South Africa, because of its position between the creativity of music performance and the ritualised hegemony of the ideological state apparatus of the university. In the South African context, in particular, the interplay between modes of cultural production and constructs of authenticity, and between constructs of ethnicity and conceptions of South African identity, create a particularly complex framework within which the choir must function. In this essay I examine the construction of South African identities through choral music-making among the choirs of three Gauteng universities, with particular reference to discourses around choral sound, performance practice and the classification of repertoire.

¹ A paper based on the pilot study for this research was published in the *Journal of the Musical Arts in Africa*, 1, 2004. This essay is extracted from a long essay written in fulfilment of the degree of Bachelor of Music at the University of the Witwatersrand, November 2005.

I would like first to thank my informants – too numerous to list – for their participation in this research, the Swedish International Development Agency and the National Research Foundation's Travelling Institute for Music Research, the Swedish-South African Research Network, Stig-Magnus Thorsen, Elisabeth Kloppers and Anri Herbst for funding and invaluable support. I would also like to thank everyone who has read and commented on this paper, including Christine Lucia, Grant Olwage, Brett Pyper, and the participants in the Swedish-South African Research Network. To my supervisor and mentor, Lara Allen, I owe immense gratitude. Lara, I cannot describe the impact you have had on me, and I consider myself privileged to have worked with and to know you.

INTRODUCTION

"If you have a hang-up about it, you can leave!" It was the last thing I expected to hear from a choir director hours before a performance. The truth was that I did have a "hang up" over what he was requiring and I did not feel unjustified. The previous evening we had been instructed to "make an African-sounding noise for eight bars" at the end of a piece of music, and aside from my discomfort over the idea of noise having a nationality, I was extremely uncomfortable with something so apparently unmusical in a choir performance. I do not know whether I actually crossed my arms and legs when the original instruction was given, but I certainly felt like doing so. I was not alone. The young woman sitting beside me pulled a face and I heard a furtively whispered debate over the sanity of the conductor somewhere to my left. But there were others who stood as if to attention, expressing solidarity with a conductor they trusted, willing to take whatever chance he considered necessary to the success of the performance. The choir was divided.

In the end we all made the required noise, and the adrenaline we were feeling after an hour and a half on stage masked any lingering discomfort we felt. Watching a video recording of the concert several weeks later, I had to concede that it was an impressive conclusion to the programme. But my discomfort lingered. Whether I wanted to accept it or not, this relatively innocuous incident caused me to question all my deeply felt perceptions about why I sing what I sing, and even what music is; more specifically, what African or South African music is. In this essay I begin to explore these broad questions through an examination of the ways in which choirs construct South African identities through discourse on, and the praxis of, choral singing.

SINGING SOUTH AFRICAN IDENTITIES

This study focuses on the official choirs of three South African universities, and their various attempts to negotiate the complex identity politics inherent in the present socio-political context of South Africa. The first choir (hereafter, choir A) claims ten years of racial integration and a multiracial ethic. The second choir (choir B), while not overtly promoting racial segregation, existed as two essentially racially segregated choirs (choir B1 for the predominantly white choir, and B2 for the black choir) until the end of 2004.² In 2005 these two choirs were dissolved and choir B was formed, overtly promoting

² The choirs are listed here in the order in which I first gained access to them in order to conduct this research. There were a few black students in choir B1, but I would argue that their small number in relation to the number of white students points to a fundamental racial segregation within the choir.

racial integration and a non-racial ethic. The pair of choirs from the third university (choir C for the predominantly white choir, and choir D for the black choir) are, like choirs B1 and B2, practically racially segregated, if not officially recognised as such.

The position of these choirs – as officially recognised by, sponsored by, and bearing the names of, particular universities – means that the choirs are implicated in the reproduction of ideological hegemony to a degree that choirs independent of large institutions may not be. Such choirs are implicated in the ritual practices of their universities, like graduation ceremonies and other formal assemblies, through their performance of specific duties at these functions. Althusser (1971) draws on earlier theorists, in particular, Gramsci, to suggest that it is through the performance of ritual that ideology is understood and believed, and that it is through the performance of, and response to, ritual that the individual is made into a subject of the ideology being performed. This process Althusser calls “interpellation” (1971, p. 107).

WHAT IS IDENTITY?

While the term “identity” is frequently associated with the individual and notions of “self”, it is difficult, or even impossible, to consider the concept without reference to the collective. Post-structuralist, postcolonial theory discourages the dichotomisation of complex concepts, but it remains fairly standard practice to conceptualise identity in terms of “self” and “other”.³ One reason for this could be that it is seldom necessary for the individual to define a personal identity unless their self-concept is challenged, and such a challenge usually exists in the form of an “other” or different identity. The identification of otherness, however, both facilitates the differentiation of individuals, and creates the possibility that the individual will begin to identify with, or recognise similarities between themselves and others. Henri Tajfel and John Turner suggest that these processes of identification are as crucial to the formation of a self-concept as is the process of differentiation. They suggest that, by recognising similarity between the self and others, the individual is able to construct a pattern of behaviour based on the normative behaviours of groups. By observing the behaviours of others with whom one identifies in some specific way, one is able to work out what behaviours will be acceptable within that group, and hence the manner in which one is expected to behave. Such normative behaviour, then, becomes incorporated into the individual’s conception of their own identity. Similarly, the observation of behaviour that is different from the normative behaviour of one’s own group (in-group) encourages one to identify other groups (out-groups) (Tajfel & Turner 1979, 1986; Tajfel 1981; Turner 1987). Identity

³ See, for example, Sartre (1948), Sartre (1956), Fanon (1967), Born & Hesmondhalgh (2000).

formation, therefore, involves negotiating the tensions between processes of identification and processes of differentiation.

The recognition of an in-group offers a stabilising influence to the individual in that the patterns of behaviour that groups map allow one to create a horizon of expectations, which in turn facilitates the imagination of a future. The individual is invested in interpreting the normative behaviour of the in-group as universal, therefore, because this allows the horizon of expectations created to apply to all situations. This belief in the naturalness of one's own actions also serves to justify the individual's behaviour by implying that no other behaviour is possible under a given set of circumstances, and therefore that any negative consequences are not the fault of the individual in question. Behaviour that does not fall within this constructed horizon of expectations, then, threatens both one's ability to predict the future, and the vindication of the self through the justification of actions. The danger that difference will be responded to as though it were a threat, then, is ever-present, and the defence of the in-group becomes a powerful ego drive.

THE FORMATION OF IDENTITY GROUPS

The potential for intergroup conflict, discussed above, is further reinforced by what Tajfel (1979, p. 185) has termed the process of "social comparison". He suggests that once groups have been identified, and individuals have been categorised as either part of the in-group, or an out-group, the individual seeks to justify group membership. This is facilitated by the production of a level of prestige for the in-group, created by prioritising identity markers perceived as unique to the in-group, or by emphasising criteria for comparison of groups that will place the in-group in a favourable light, while de-emphasising categories in which the in-group may not excel (Tajfel & Turner 1986).

Any aspect of group identification perceived as "unique" to the in-group could potentially be mobilised as a primary criterion for group identification. Often such identification criteria are focused on aspects of cultural production. The reason for this is, in part, the fact that judgements on the value and aesthetics of cultural products are recognised as subjective. Any form or mode of cultural production can therefore be defended as valuable, and hence can lend prestige to the group within the context in which it was created. Similarly, any mode of cultural production can be judged to be invalid within a specific group context, and can hence be interpreted as diminishing the prestige of the group within which its production was facilitated.

One of the (many) complexities of analyses of modes of cultural production lies in the fact that, while different cultures are usually associated with specific population groups,

and are therefore usually understood to be unique to these groups, it is also necessary to recognise that biology does not predetermine the culture(s) within which an individual will function. Rather, the culture that becomes most closely associated with each individual will be the one with which they interact most intensely as a result of their proximity to the groups that practise that culture. Cultural practice, when understood in this way, can therefore (theoretically) be learned and practised by any human being, regardless of race.⁴ That race identification has been used as an oppressive strategy in South Africa often results in the construction of in-group identification based on shared culture, rather than purely on the basis of race. Culture affords individuals more agency than do biological constructs of identity in that it provides for the possibility that an individual may reject group membership by wilfully rejecting cultural practices, or conversely, may achieve group membership through cultural participation.

As empowering as the possibility of self-determined cultural identity may be, however, it is also somewhat destabilising to the construction of a horizon of expectation based on group categorisation, in that it weakens the structures that facilitate the identification of individuals with specific groups. As the potential for individuality and self-determination increases, so too does the potential for rejection of the group ethic by the individual and of the individual by members of the group. For this reason the urge to protect in-group identities by limiting the potential for variation from the norm, and even to protect the perceived identities of out-groups in a similar way, has increased in South Africa as notions of biological determinism on which apartheid policies depended have lost favour.

SOUTH AFRICAN IDENTITY POLITICS

The “Rainbow Nation” concept, in which the ruling political party in South Africa – the ANC – was heavily invested immediately following the first democratic elections in 1994, drew on the notion of multiple identities and multiple voices, each with its own,

⁴ This argument is related to the so-called “nature/nurture debate” in the social sciences which draws on the various interpretations by Descartes, on the one hand, and Hobbes and Locke on the other, concerning the behaviour of human beings, and the extent of variation within the human species. Descartes argued that individuals carried certain in-born characteristics and predispositions which determined their interpretations of the world. Hobbes and Locke, on the other hand, emphasised the role of experience in meaning-making (Radford 2004, online). The nature/nurture debate remains contentious as it is frequently mobilised in arguments concerning, among other things, genetic science and cloning (James 2002, online), homosexuality (Schmidt 1995), and the adoption of children of a particular race by parents of another (Register 2005).

distinctive character, co-existing with, and contributing to, the collective. But there is an inherent tension between the government-sponsored notions of South Africa as a “Rainbow Nation”, and the mainly foreign-policy motivated conception of the “African Renaissance” which has come to dominate more recent discourse. While the Rainbow Nation ideology, as Cock and Bernstein (2002, online) point out, is predicated around the notion of multiracialism,⁵ the African Renaissance is conceptualised as a “counterbalance” to Eurocentric international relations (Kornegay, Landsberg & McDonald 2001, p. 106), and hence can be interpreted as antagonistic to South African identities with historical and cultural connections to Europe. South Africa’s present position in the international political and economic arena is projected as necessarily dependent on the construction of an African identity that remains clearly distinct from Euro-American identities, in order to offer a counterbalance to dominant voices within the transnational political arena. In adopting this position, however, the South African government runs the risk of alienating white South Africans.

A democracy depends on the majority of citizens supporting “the nation” as an objective entity, even if individuals do not support the government in power. Benedict Anderson (1983) has characterised the creation of this common support for what he calls an “imagined community” (Anderson 1983, p. 6) as the construction of a “common narrative” evident in the telling of recognisable stories of common origin or shared culture (Anderson 1983, p. 25). The difficulty with the South African situation is that, while pride in the achievement of democracy can, and often is, mobilised toward the creation of support for the nation of South Africa, such pride is complicated by guilt or anger, depending on the individual’s relationship to the struggle narrative. The racialised nature of our history of conflict creates a racialised division in South African identities. The task of a government, or in fact any social body seeking to create the sense of social responsibility necessary for the effective functioning of the nation of South Africa, then, is the creation of a commonality that is empowering and inclusive, rather than exclusionary and divisive. Culture is frequently the vehicle for such a construction.

⁵ I distinguish between non-racialism and multiracialism in this essay, as the two expressions, while sometimes used interchangeably, characterise two different constructs of South African identity, subscribed to by the choirs I study in this paper—non-racialism focuses on de-emphasising difference in order to promote equality, while multiracialism aims to celebrate difference and calls for equality within a structure that recognises the functionality of difference.

HOW THE CHOIR FUNCTIONS WITHIN UNIVERSITY RITUAL

The graduation ceremony is a primary site for the formation of in-group identity within the university. Through the conferment of a degree or tenure, or the granting of some other form of recognition or change of status, individuals are interpellated as members of the university community. The performance of songs like the national anthem at such ceremonies constitutes a powerful medium for this interpellation of the individual, not only as a subject of the specific university community, but also the broader intellectual community and the nation state.

Althusser (1971, pp. 162–165) cites schools (universities are, by implication, included in this definition) as a primary Ideological State Apparatus (ISA) and describes how, because they portray an image of respect for, and understanding of, the intellectual rights and freedom of scholars, they in fact mask their functioning as agents for the reproduction of hegemony. This masking is potentially even stronger in the case of the university choir, as the choir, being a space for music-making, is frequently associated with ideals of individuality and freedom. It is a common stereotype that may have some basis in the fact that music-making is about liberating self-expression. Most of the choristers I have interviewed in the past two years have cited creative expression as a primary reason for singing in choirs, and many have suggested that singing frees them from the constraints placed on them in their day-to-day lives. Many singers with whom I have conversed who chose not to sing in choirs, however, cite loss of individuality and a reduced capacity for self-expression within a choir as reasons, and suggest that the need to blend with other voices limits the expressive potential of choral singing.⁶ The fact that “blend”⁷ and discipline were among the most frequently cited prerequisites for good choral performance in my various interviews and conversations with choristers, choir directors and audiences of choral concerts suggests that there is some validity in this point. Blend and discipline are closely linked concepts in the practice of the choirs in question. Blend is connected to uniformity, and is a concept closely associated with the discipline of choral singing in that it involves restraint, careful listening and the gradual shaping of performance through rehearsal of often microscopic muscle movements.

⁶ Cf. Ekholm (2000) for a discussion on the differences between solo and choral singing, with particular reference to choral blend.

⁷ I use the word “blend” here and elsewhere in this paper, as it occurred most commonly in discourses amongst the choirs studied as an abstract noun, which refers to a choral sound in which individual voices are not distinguishable from one another.

UNIFORM SOUND

The construct of uniformity within a choir, however, is qualified by the recognition that individual voices within a choir sound different. Blend is sought by reducing variation within performance to a minimum through consideration of articulation, tone colour and interpretation. Choristers are taught to produce uniform “pure vowels” and “modified vowels” by mimicking the vocalisation of the conductor, while consonants are practised for uniformity of sound, and carefully timed at the beginning and end of phrases or musical lines to avoid a staggered articulation.⁸ One reason for this concern with unity of articulation is invariably that cited by the conductors of the choirs involved in this study – that unclear pronunciation masks the text being sung, and can be distracting to an audience listening for the meaning of the music. The possibility that meaning is carried not within the text but within the musical sound is discussed by Lawrence Kramer (2000) and falls beyond the scope of this essay. Of greater importance for this discussion, however, is Grant Olwage’s suggestion that the creation of uniformity of sound, particularly with reference to vowel shapes, is a form of discipline implicated in the process of social construction and control and, in the South African context, with the project of colonialism (Olwage 2002).

While Olwage makes a compelling case for the colonisation of choral sound, all of the choral directors I interviewed resisted this formulation, suggesting instead that there were more practical considerations in favour of the use of soft-singing and blending techniques. All the conductors interviewed suggested that soft singing facilitates correct intonation, as a chorister who is singing too loudly would be unable to accurately hear the pitch produced by their fellow choristers or any accompanying instruments. One director, who had experimented with overtone singing, explained that this method was not possible without a carefully controlled blend and volume, while another referenced the rules of singing competitions which list blend as a primary consideration for adjudication of choirs. Nonetheless, Olwage’s point that vocal and choral sound has been racialised is borne out by common conceptions of choral sound that I have encountered throughout this research.

⁸ In vocal pedagogy, pure vowels are usually considered to be the “vowel sounds [that] are common in many languages: a as in *father*; e as in *lay*; e as in *echo*; i as in *ink*; o as in *low*; o as in French *bon*; u as in *loot*” (Onovwerosuoke 2002, p. 17). These vowels are sometimes modified by altering the shape of the lips, while maintaining the shape inside the mouth that occurs when pure vowels are produced. The result is a variation in tone colour.

RACIALISING SOUND

Even increasingly widespread discomfort with biological determinism has not diminished the hegemony of the idea that there is a causal correlation between race and vocal timbre among many choral practitioners and consumers.⁹ During a series of interviews I conducted with members of what was to become choir B several weeks before the first rehearsal of this choir, I encountered frequent expressions of a fear of what I will describe as aural contamination. Choristers from choir B1 suggested that, while the sound produced by choir B2 was neither fundamentally better or worse than the sound produced by their own choir, it was not suitable for some of the music the choir had performed to date, and that the combining of the choirs would make the performance of such music an impossibility in the future. On the other hand, the same choristers expressed hope that the newly-combined choir would be able to produce a more “authentically African sound” than choir B1 had achieved when performing African music as a result of the inclusion of more black students in the choir. Similarly, choristers from Choirs C and D, when interviewed, suggested that keeping the choirs separate was the most practical way to ensure musical diversity on their university campus, as combining the choirs would result in a sound not suitable for the performance of music of either the Western classical, or the black South African tradition. While many choristers were uneasy about expressly equating such difference with a biological imperative, all agreed that it was, at the very least, a cultural distinction that separated the races, and many stated that it was both impossible, and potentially undesirable, to aim to change such circumstances.

This differentiation process is an example of what Tajfel and Turner (1986) have called “comparison”. For members of choir D, their projection of indisputable Africanness, defined according to race, is a characteristic that both distinguishes them from the other choirs and privileges them in an African Renaissance socio-political model. In the case of choir C, on the other hand, the majority of the choristers’ identities are only African under certain, qualified constructions of Africanness, and so an alternative category of comparison is sought. In this particular instance, the category selected is “sound

⁹ Biological determinism is a perceptual framework for the interpretation of human and animal behaviour. It was originally based on Aristotelian constructs of “human nature”. It has lost favour across many critical disciplines, with the notable exception of evolutionary psychology, largely because of its implication in repressive regimes like apartheid. Biological determinism maintains currency within the natural sciences (Gaskell 2004).

quality”, a particularly complicated construct, due to its subjective nature.¹⁰ Sound quality is constructed in this instance by comparison with other choirs in a broadly-conceptualised global choral community that takes as normative the structure and functioning of choirs similar to choir C. The identity constructed by this choir, then, is less localised than that projected by choir D. Choirs A and B also engage with this global community, although both on different terms from choir C, as a result of their simultaneous engagement with a more localised African identity. Choristers in both choirs A and B spoke during interviews about being “internationally competitive”, but, as a chorister from choir A put it, in words that bring to mind Homi Bhabha (1994, p. 122), “we’re just as good as them [choirs in other countries], but different”.

“THE WAY WE LOOK ON STAGE”

One area in which the continuum of difference is quite graphically demonstrated is in the appearance of the various choirs in performance. Choral performance is at least partly about visual effect, and analysis that focuses entirely on sound is impoverished. In the case of the choirs under examination, though, appearance is as much a part of the negotiation of identity politics as is the sound produced. And to some degree, the appearance of the choir has an impact on the sound produced. Elizabeth Ekholm (2000), for example, writes about the impact of seating arrangement on choral blend, while a singing teacher once explained to me that “unnecessary movement” during performance weakened the voice as it redirected energy from the muscles employed in singing, to other, usually much larger muscles.¹¹ All of these choirs employ some movement in their performances. Choirs A and D move the most, employing stylised, synchronised and rehearsed movement in most songs. Choir A also encourage, in the director’s words, “a free body” during the performance of songs, or parts of songs, in which movement is not prescribed. The use of movement, however, is not universally accepted as positive. Several weeks before the first rehearsal of choir B, a chorister who had sung with choir B1 for seven years expressed concern at the possibility of more movement being included in the programme of the new choir. He explained how, two years earlier, in

¹⁰ Sound quality is an aesthetic category with, as yet, no objective measure. Like other aesthetic categories, it is a cultural construct (Adorno 1997) with a fluid character that evades definition. Sound quality is frequently described using the language of visual art. Its importance in choral music praxis rests with the fact that music performance, as an aesthetically constructed mode of production, requires the performer to engage sound quality by taking up a position of aesthetic judgement, and then striving for perfection as defined by that position.

¹¹ Personal communication.

preparation for an international tour, choir B1 had asked choir B2 to teach them songs in local languages with movement. “We spent all this time learning the actions, with them laughing at these white boys who don’t get it,” he explained, “but we learned the music in a few minutes. We just followed what they sang, and we didn’t know if the words were right, or anything.” He explained how, during this practice, a disagreement had arisen between two members of choir B2 over a particular harmony, and how they had instructed the B1 choir to “just sing anything” as long as the movement was effective. A chorister from choir C likewise suggested that too much movement in a programme detracted from the singing and could, in fact, introduce extraneous noise that would mask the sound.

A particularly positive result of effective movement during choral performance is the almost universally positive audience response it receives. Choir A expressly invites audience members to participate in the movements of a particular song, but even without this prompting, it is not uncommon for audience members to stand up and dance along with any one of these choirs during an especially well-appreciated number. Audiences are also, according to my observation, more likely to vocalise approval during the applause for a number that makes use of movement than for one that does not. This is partly a matter of convention (movement is not usually employed in music of the Western classical tradition, and it is not customary to vocalise during applause for music from this tradition), but is also related to the choir’s encouraging such responses by ululating, whistling or vocalising in a similar manner during particular songs. One chorister from choir C admitted that the choir often explicitly rehearse these vocalisations, along with hand clapping, in certain songs at the rehearsal stage in order to evoke a similar audience response.

The conventions of appropriate audience response to choral performance, and the conventions around appropriate movement, are directly connected to similar conventions in all types of music performance. Applause, or the voicing of approval, are restricted to specific places (i.e. at the end of a work) during performances of music of the Western classical or art music traditions, while approval can be expressed at any point during the performance of jazz and some African music. Performers’ use of movements, and audience response, then, becomes a particularly racialised matter. Movement and dancing are particularly associated with “African Tradition” repertoire.

RACIALISED REPERTOIRE

I would argue that repertoire is one of the most highly racialised and hence, politicised, aspects of choral performance. Choirs B2 and D identified themselves as “chorales”

based on their singing of “chorale repertoire”, which was described by various choristers as consisting primarily of hymns, “traditional songs” and “struggle songs” sung in “indigenous African languages”.¹² Similarly, the other choirs distinguished themselves from these chorales primarily on the basis of repertoire. In fact, choirs B and C both divide performances into sections for “art” repertoire (i.e. repertoire of the Western tradition) and “traditional” repertoire, and choirs C and B1 have both, at various times, made use of costume changes between these sections.

This division between types of repertoire is in many ways representative of the division between constructs of South African identity subscribed to by the various choirs. Choir A, claiming a multiracial ethic, aims to integrate elements from both types of repertoire based on stylistic variation and does not split performances into sections in terms of type of repertoire. Choir C indicates a clear divide during performances between types of repertoire, a move reflecting the division between white and black choristers and their respective choirs on this particular campus. Choir D, reinforcing their construction of South Africanness as tied to black South African culture, sings almost exclusively music of the black chorale tradition. Choir B, however, provides a more complex case as the choir subscribes, in terms of official discourse, to a non-racial ethic, and yet in practice performances are divided between sections of repertoire in a manner similar to that employed by choir C. Whether this is simply a residual practice from the time when the choir was split into two separate choirs, or an indication of the practical functioning of this new choir, is difficult to tell.

AN AFRICAN-SOUNDING NOISE

The varying interpretations of choral performance demonstrated by the four choirs mentioned in this paper reflect several different constructs of South African-ness, all of which have currency in official discourse in South Africa at present. The tension between the “Rainbow Nation” ideology and constructs of an “African Renaissance” that exist in official political discourses in particular is reflected and renegotiated by these choirs through choral practice and discourse. These constructs are then implicated in the interpellative practices of the ideological state apparatus of the university through

¹² Hymns, in this context, are usually sung in black African languages, traditional songs are considered songs of the black African tradition, and indigenous African languages are generally considered to be black African languages. Afrikaans is excluded from this last construct in much of South Africa (excluding the Western Cape) for the same reasons that Afrikaners were classified as “European” during the apartheid years, although this formulation is frequently challenged, mainly in the context of arguments focusing on language preservation in present-day South Africa.

the functioning of the choir within the ritual practice of the university. The result is that even apparently purely aesthetic decisions about vocal production, costume and movement style are often highly politicised, while choirs which are popularly interpreted as spaces of liberating and creative self-expression – spaces in which the individual can escape the structures of daily life – mask their hegemonic functioning.

I would not like to create the impression, though, that the choir is simply another oppressive apparatus of power in which helpless, unthinking individuals are forced to subscribe to official constructions of identity. Choirs have the potential to become creative spaces for the renegotiation of these structures through their powerful ideological functioning and formalised position within university structures. Such a potential, however, can only be realised when the current functioning of these choirs is understood and the particular points of hegemony are recognised.

Looking back at the choir performance described at the beginning of this paper, I recognise my discomfort as the result of a challenge to my construction of what it means to engage multiculturalism. I have always enjoyed the “African” section of a choral programme because it gave me an opportunity to engage the uncomfortable identity politics that I, as a white South African, face on a daily basis. I could, through a gentle stretching of the boundaries of the identity imposed on me by my position within the political structures of this country, taste the freedom to construct my own identity in terms of engagement with any cultural practice I choose. And then, by leaving the uncomfortably non-white celebrating to others more familiar with it, by not whistling, or ululating, or clapping during a particularly satisfying musical moment, I could return to the safety of my arm-crossing, leg-crossing culturally constructed “appropriate behaviour”. I do not remember exactly what I did during those eight bars of African-sounding noise, but I have since learned to ululate, and if I ever perform that music again, that is what I shall do.

REFERENCES

- Adorno, T.W. 1997. *Aesthetic theory*. (R. Hullot-Kentor trans). London: Athlone Press.
- Althusser, L. 1971. Ideology and ideological state apparatuses. In L. Althusser, *Lenin and philosophy and other essays* (B. Brewster trans). New York and London: Monthly Review Press, pp. 127–185.
- Anderson, B 1983. *Imagined communities: Reflections on the origin and spread of nationalism*. London and New York: Verso.
- Bhabha, H. 1994. Of mimicry and man: The ambivalence of colonial discourse. In H. Bhabha (ed.), *The location of culture*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 85–92.

- Born, G. & Hesmondhalgh, D. (eds.) 2000. *Western music and its others: Difference, representation and appropriation in music*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Cock, J. & Bernstein, A. 2002. *Melting pots and rainbow nation: Conversations about difference in the United States and South Africa*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
<http://www.press.uillinois.edu/epub/books/cock/toc.htm> [Date of access: 28 April 2005].
- Ekholm, E. 2000. The Effect of singing mode and seating arrangement on choral blend and overall choral sound. *Journal of Research in Music Education*, 48(2), pp. 123–135.
- Fanon, F. 1967. *Black skin, white masks*. New York: Grove Weidenfeld.
- Gaskell, G. 2004. Social Psychology, in *Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia*. Microsoft Corporation.
- Hammond, N. 2004. Singing South African-ness: The construction of identity among South African youth choirs. *The Journal of the Musical Arts in Africa*, 1, 103–115.
- James, H. 2002. Essay in support of human cloning, in *Human Cloning.org*.
<http://www.humancloning.org/essays/james.htm> [Date of access: 3 November 2005].
- Kornegay, F., Landsberg, C. & McDonald, S. 2001. Participate in the African Renaissance. *The Washington Quarterly*, 24(3), pp. 105–112.
<http://www.twq.com/01summer/landsberg.pdf> [Date of access: 17 September 2005].
- Kramer, L. 2000. On deconstructive text-music relationships. In D. B. Scott (ed.), *Music, culture and society: A reader*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 173–179.
- Olwage, G. 2004. The class and colour of tone: An essay on the social history of vocal timbre. *Ethnomusicology Forum* 13(2), pp. 203–226.
- Onovwerosuoke, F. 2002. Contemplating African choral music: Insights for non-indigenes and foreign conductors. *Choral Journal* 42(10), pp. 9–19.
- Radford, J. 2004. “Psychology”, in *Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia*. Microsoft Corporation.
- Register, C. 2005. *Beyond good intentions: A mother reflects on raising internationally adopted children*. St. Paul, Minnesota: Yeong & Yeong Book Company.
- Roe, K. 1996. Music and identity among European youth: Music as communication. In P. Rutten (ed.), *Music in Europe, Part II: Music, culture and society in Europe*. Brussels: European Music Office, pp. 85–97.
- Sartre, J.-P. 1948. *Anti-semitism and Jew*. New York: Schocken.
- Sartre, J.-P. 1956. *Being and nothingness: An essay in phenomenological ontology*. Secaucus: Citadel Press.
- Schmidt, T.E. 1995. *Straight and narrow? Compassion and clarity in the homosexuality debate*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press.
- Tajfel, H. 1979. Individuals and groups in Social Psychology. *The British Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 18, pp. 183–190.
- Tajfel, H. 1981. *Human groups and social categories*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Tajfel, H. & Turner J.C. 1979. An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W.G. Austin & S. Worchel (eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations*. Monterey: Brooks-Cole, pp. 33–48.
- Tajfel, H. & Turner J.C. 1986. The social identity theory of intergroup behaviour. In S. Austin & W.G. Austin (eds.), *Psychology of intergroup relations*. Chicago: Nelson Hall, pp. 7–24.

- Turner, J.C. 1987. *Rediscovering the social group: self-categorization theory*. With M.A. Hogg, P J Oakes, S D Reicher and M S Wetherell. New York: Basil Blackwell.
- Whitesell, L. 2001. White noise: Race and erasure in the cultural avant-garde. *American Music* 19(2), pp. 168–189.

TONIC SOL-FA: AN EXOGENOUS ASPECT OF SOUTH AFRICAN MUSICAL IDENTITY

Robin S. Stevens, Deakin University, Australia

ABSTRACT

The tonic sol-fa method of teaching choral singing was developed in England by John Curwen and propagated throughout Britain as a means of enhancing Christian worship and achieving social reform. It was promoted in South Africa through Christian missions and later through government-supported schools. Despite criticisms by several African scholars who have identified the adverse effects of European music on indigenous peoples, it is contended that tonic sol-fa has been so fully assimilated into the African cultural milieu that it has been “indigenised” and become the mainstay of community choral singing. This essay outlines the historical development of tonic sol-fa and reports on present-day perceptions about the extent and nature of its use. It is argued that tonic sol-fa is one of the more positive aspects of European music introduced to Africa. As such, it represents a significant exogenous aspect of present-day South African musical identity.

INTRODUCTION

The tonic sol-fa method of teaching choral singing, together with its letter notation, was developed in England from the early 1840s by the Methodist minister, John Curwen.¹ It was propagated throughout the British Isles as a means of both enhancing Christian worship and promoting social reform. Having been largely based on a pre-existing method (Sarah Glover’s *Norwich Sol-fa*), tonic sol-fa was developed by Curwen as a means of fulfilling his commission from a conference of Sunday school teachers to recommend “some simple method to the churches which should enable all to sing with ease and propriety” (quoted in Rainbow 1980, p. 17). Tonic sol-fa ultimately became the mainstay of congregational singing, not only in Methodist churches, but in churches of many denominations throughout Britain. The method was also widely employed by

¹ The origins and the pedagogical and notational principles of Tonic Sol-fa are fully described in Stevens 2003.

temperance workers and other social reformers, particularly in the north of England, as a means of attracting mill and factory workers away from undesirable pursuits towards the more “wholesome occupation” of choral singing (see Nettel 1944).

One area where tonic sol-fa made considerable inroads was the work of overseas missionary organisations such as the London Missionary Society and the Church Missionary Society. Indeed missionaries were trained at Curwen’s pastorate at Plaistow by one of his assistants, Alfred Brown, from the early 1860s (*The Tonic Sol-fa Reporter [TSf Rep]* Oct 1863, p. 139). Tonic sol-fa was introduced to potential converts by missionaries who sought to exploit the attraction of hymns, particularly when sung in four-part harmony, as a means of evangelising indigenous peoples. However, in most indigenous communities where it gained a foothold, tonic sol-fa may now be identified not only as an instrument of Christian evangelism, but also of European cultural imposition. Particularly in the immediate post-apartheid era there have been criticisms, especially by revisionist historians and proponents of cultural nationalism (see Olwage 2002, pp. 39–40), of certain foreign cultural practices imposed on indigenous South Africans over the past two hundred years. One such area is music, where Nzewi (1999, p. 72, quoted in Joseph 2005), for example, forthrightly asserts that the introduction to Africa of European music education philosophies, content, practices and pedagogies has resulted in “a radical, deculturalising process which continues to produce a crisis of cultural inferiority [and] mental inadequacy ...” for indigenous African communities. Other scholars such as Agawu (2003) and Akrofi (2003) have identified the adverse effects resulting from the introduction of European music to Africa. In particular, Agawu (2003, p. 8, quoted in Akrofi 2003) asserts that: “Of all the musical influence spawned by the colonial encounter, that of tonal-functional harmony has been the most pervasive, the most far reaching, and ultimately the most disastrous”.

Such criticisms have often been specifically directed towards hymn singing introduced by missionaries and the effect of its imposition on indigenous communities. In keeping with the prevailing notion of “civilising the natives” by insisting that indigenous people wear European clothing and adopt other Western cultural norms, missionaries attempted to replace the indigenous musical culture with choral singing of Christian hymns (Hollar 2001). This imported music was taught through formal instructional methods, as well as being transmitted through notation. This was in stark contrast to indigenous African music, which was passed down orally from one generation to the next through an informal, community-based approach without being recorded in notated form.

Unlike the situation in former British colonies such as Canada, Australia and New Zealand, the indigenous population of South Africa has retained its demographic

predominance and, in the immediate post-apartheid era, is reclaiming its endogenous culture, as well as recognising exogenous aspects of its cultural heritage.² The principal theme – and indeed, the major contention – of this chapter is that tonic sol-fa represents one of the more positive aspects of European choralism³ introduced to Africa and that it has now been so fully assimilated into the local ethnic culture that it has effectively been “indigenised”. As such, it represents a significant exogenous aspect of present-day South African musical identity.

FROM FOREIGN IMPORT TO INDIGENISED MUSICAL IDIOM

The story of tonic sol-fa in South Africa spans a period of almost a century and a half. Its dissemination may be identified as having passed through three distinct phases: its initial importation as part of what was effectively the British colonial community’s attempt to reproduce its own musical culture in South Africa, its use as a means of proselytising the Christian faith, and finally its promotion in schools. The result is that many present-day African indigenous choral musicians regard the method and its notation, or least certain aspects of tonic sol-fa, as being as an intrinsic part of their own cultural milieu.

BEGINNINGS IN THE CAPE COLONY AS PART OF BRITISH CULTURAL REPRODUCTION

One of the pioneer tonic sol-fa-ists in South African, whom Nixon (1898, p. 23) describes as “the father of the [Tonic Sol-fa] system in Cape Colony”, was Christopher Birkett, who emigrated from England to South Africa about 1854. Birkett trained as a teacher at the Westminster (Wesleyan) Training College during 1853–54 with another key figure, Henry Nixon (*The School Music Review* [*Sch Mus Rev*] 1894, p. 74). Although both men were trained in Hullah’s fixed doh method, they later converted to tonic sol-fa (*The Musical Herald* [*Mus Her*] 1894, p. 263). Nixon appears to have been involved in teaching tonic sol-fa at the Trinity Episcopalian Church and Wesleyan Grammar School in Cape Town from the late 1860s (*TSf Rep* Feb 1868, p. 28; Aug 1872, p. 287), whereas Birkett worked in Grahamstown, Healdtown and later at Craddock. Nixon, who came to South Africa in 1863, was later appointed as Inspector of School Music for the Cape

² The term “endogenous” in this context refers to aspects of cultural/social identity originating or developing from inside the culture, whereas the term “exogenous” refers to those aspects originating from outside the culture.

³ “Choralism” is a term coined by Olwage (2002, p. 30) and described as “the entire range of practices and discourses that constitute black South African choral music practice: performance practice, choral composition, choral institutions, and so on.”

Colony and also published a significant tonic sol-fa textbook entitled *The Tonic Sol-fa System: What is it?* in 1898.

Although Birkett commenced tonic sol-fa teaching when he arrived in South Africa in the mid-1850s, his first reported use of the method was at Sunday schools in Grahamstown in 1863 (*TSf Rep* Sept 1863, p. 126). Birkett was later reported as conducting classes numbering over 500 members for both European and indigenous communities in Grahamstown and using the system of graded certificate examinations of the then Tonic Sol-fa School (later the Tonic Sol-fa College). His efforts in training a choir of mainly Fingo members in tonic sol-fa resulted in a reportedly fine performance of choral pieces by Handel, Mendelssohn and other popular composers of the time. To his credit, Birkett apparently set out to build a greater degree of mutual respect between the indigenous and colonial communities through music — “He has raised the natives in the estimation of some, and he has made [the] natives see that the colonists can treat them with consideration” (*TSf Rep* Jan 1864, pp. 195–196). In 1871 Birkett published a widely-used book of one hundred tunes in tonic sol-fa notation entitled *Ingoma* or *Penult Psalm Tunes*.

Another pioneer tonic sol-fa-ist was John Ashley, who introduced the method to English and Dutch communities in Cape Town from the early 1860s (*Mus Her* 1894, p. 263). One of the first instances of tonic sol-fa teaching in South Africa was reported in 1862 by a local correspondent to *The Tonic Sol-fa Reporter*, who noted that a congregational singing class from the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Cape Town was being taught by Ashley (*TSf Rep* July 1862, p. 300). Later that year Ashley’s tonic sol-fa teaching had extended to include the Cape Town Choral Society and the Scottish (presumably Presbyterian) church and other local churches at Rondebosch and Claremont, and to indigenous people at the Scottish Mission College in Zonnebloem (*TSf Rep* Nov 1862, p. 382). Ashley continued with his tonic sol-fa teaching well into the 1870s and 1880s, having taught in local schools and at Episcopal Churches at Mowbray and Wynburg (*TSf Rep* Jun 1872, p. 167), conducted the first concert of the Tonic Sol-fa Choral Union in November 1872 (*TSf Rep* Jan 1873, p. 30), directed the Sacred Harmonic Society until at least 1875 (*TSf Rep* Aug 1875, p. 245) and acted as choirmaster for the Cape Town Philharmonic Society formed in 1881 (*TSf Rep* Aug 1881, p. 174).

Yet another pioneer was the English dentist, Thomas Daines, who, from about 1860, offered classes in sight reading and part-singing, presumably to the European community at King William’s Town (Henning 1979a, p. 307). Two years later, in 1862, Daines became involved in teaching tonic sol-fa to indigenous pupils at St Matthew’s Mission School and, by 1867, was conducting a Bantu choir of some 200 to 300 voices in part-songs, hymns and music by Purcell (Henning 1979a, p. 307). Daine’s work at King

William's Town continued to the early 1870s at least, and he appears to have achieved considerable success at the local public non-denominational school and in training Sunday school and church choirs (*TSf Rep* Feb 1870, p. 236; May 1870, p. 333). The last report of Daine's work was in 1877 when he was teaching both tonic sol-fa and staff notation to students at the Kaffrarian Collegiate Girls School in King William's Town (*TSf Rep* Feb 1877, p. 33).

Other tonic sol-fa teachers in the Cape Colony included Rev. George Morgan and William Thomas. Morgan introduced the method to the Dutch Reformed Church at Stellenbosch (presumably the *Stellenbosch Moedergemeente*), where a tonic sol-fa class was formed at the Theological Seminary (*TSf Rep* Jun 1872, p. 167). Thomas travelled weekly from Cape Town to Stellenbosch and to Somerset West, where he had large classes of both European and "coloured" people. His work with tonic sol-fa obviously had considerable impact as "[i]n these districts, Modulators, Reporters and Exercise Books are found and used in almost every house, and sacred and secular pieces are sung in the streets, fields and workshops" (*TSf Rep* Jan 1873, p. 30).

DISSEMINATION THROUGH CHRISTIAN MISSIONS

The majority of missions established in South Africa during the 19th century were either Anglican or non-conformist Protestant, whereas Roman Catholic missions were established in French, Italian and Portuguese colonies in East, Central and West Africa. Missions established by the non-conformist Protestant denominations – Methodist (Wesleyan), Baptist, Presbyterian and Congregational – generally adopted the tonic sol-fa method and notation as their principal means of promoting congregational singing. At mission schools of all denominations music was frequently included as one of the "ordinary subjects of instruction" taught in colonial schools throughout the British Empire at the time, but also promoted as a means of inculcating moral and religious principles through the singing of hymns and other liturgical music.

Although Ashley, Birkett, Daines and others had taught tonic sol-fa at mission schools in the more populous areas, the method had by 1883 been introduced to rural mission stations in Basutoland, in Kaffraria and around Port Elizabeth to the south (*TSf Rep* 1883, p. 145). Tonic sol-fa was also being taught at "native day schools" by indigenous teachers trained at Lovedale Institution and much was made of the ability of local indigenous people to assimilate and utilise tonic sol-fa notation in their singing, not only of hymns, but also of larger choral works such as the "Hallelujah" chorus from Handel's *Messiah* (*TSf Rep* 1887, p. 280).

Lovedale Mission, founded in the 1820s by the Glasgow Missionary Society and located near the inland town of Alice, serves as a good example of missionary use of tonic sol-fa. Aside from its religious activities, the mission's principal objective was the education of the local indigenous community. A school for boys was established in 1841 which later promoted higher education for young Xhosa men. The ultimate result of its educational work was that some hundreds of boys from Lovedale passed the Cape University public examinations and hundreds of Xhosa teachers were trained at Lovedale (Gandhi 1905). An important means of supporting the education of local people – and indeed of indigenous South Africans generally – was the establishment at Lovedale of a printing press which, from 1823, produced evangelical and educational publications including a Xhosa Bible, hymn books in tonic sol-fa notation, school reading books and other Christian literature. The key figure at Lovedale during its heyday was the Rev. Dr James Stewart (1831–1905), who joined the staff in 1867 and became its principal in 1870.

Tonic sol-fa was adopted at Lovedale with considerable success and, with the publication of music in tonic sol-fa notation being promoted by the Lovedale Press, music composed by several indigenous South Africans was printed and widely distributed. An example of an indigenous African composer who achieved prominence and indeed has been cited by Khumalo (1998) as “the father of our African choral music competition[s]” was Rev. John Knox Bokwe (1855–1922). Bokwe came to Lovedale when very young and became house and stable boy to James Stewart in 1867. He attended school there and later worked in the publishing office of the Lovedale periodical, the *Kaffir Express*, before becoming secretary to Stewart (Shepherd 1941, p. 194). During his early years at Lovedale, Bokwe was taught piano and organ by Stewart’s wife Mina, and later turned his hand to composing choral music. Although Bokwe had learnt tonic sol-fa as a pupil at Lovedale, his early compositions were, according to Malan (1979a, p. 201), written in staff notation. Nevertheless, his compositions were certainly published in tonic sol-fa notation and widely disseminated throughout South Africa. During his more than twenty years on the staff at Lovedale, Bokwe acted as choirmaster and trained singers in tonic sol-fa. In 1895 *The Musical Herald* announced that Bokwe had published a book of tunes in four-part harmony through the Lovedale Press (*Mus Her* 1895, p. 95). This was undoubtedly the collection entitled *Amacula ase Lovedale* that included songs set in tonic sol-fa notation to Xhosa words and had originally been published at Lovedale in 1875.

Another and ultimately more prominent composer who was born and educated at Lovedale was Enoch Mankayi Sontonga (1873–1905) – his melody for “Nkosi Sikelel’ i Afrika” is now the first part of the new (1994) National Anthem of South Africa. As a teacher at Nancefield outside Johannesburg, Sontonga composed several songs, notated

in an exercise book in tonic sol-fa notation for his pupils to sing. According to Kirby (1979, p. 245), “Nkosi Sikelel ‘i Afrika” was actually written in 1897 and first publicly performed in 1899. Sontonga died before any of these songs could be published and it was not until 1929 that “Nkosi Sikelel ‘i Afrika” was published in the *Presbyterian Xhosa Hymn Book* by the Lovedale Press (Kirby 1979, p. 245).

Although Lovedale Training Institution appears to have been a major centre for tonic sol-fa teaching, there were many other missions in rural areas where the method was utilised, not only in teacher training, but also as part of the wider evangelical outreach to the indigenous community. Nixon (1898, p. 28) mentions the early work of Rev. Canon Peters at the Church of England’s Native Institution at Zonnebloem and that of Rev. Mabile, head of the French Protestant Mission in South Africa, as significant in the training of local teachers in tonic sol-fa as part of their missionary work. However, in urban areas, where the influence of the mission stations was less apparent, tonic sol-fa nevertheless gained a foothold through public and other government-supported schools.

PROMOTION IN GOVERNMENT-SUPPORTED SCHOOLS

After what may be considered as the pioneering work of the early tonic sol-fa-ists at the local community level, advocates such as John Ashley and Henry Nixon in Cape Town began to assert their influence to have the method and its notation formally adopted as part of the school curriculum. About 1882 the then Superintendent General of Education, Langham Dale, approved the introduction of music into the syllabus of subjects for the Public School Teacher's Certificate and Henry Nixon was appointed as Inspector of Music in Training Colleges and Schools for the Cape Colony (*Sch Mus Rev* 1894, p. 74; *Mus Her* 1894, p. 263). Dale was apparently sufficiently impressed by Nixon's advocacy of tonic sol-fa that the system was put on an equal footing with staff notation for use in public schools (*Mus Her* 1894, p. 263).

Dale's successor as Superintendent General of Education in 1891 was Thomas Muir – reportedly “himself a lover of music” (*Sch Mus Rev* 1894, p. 74). Muir commissioned Nixon as Inspector of Music to report on the state of music in Cape schools and, as a result, two instructors – Arthur Lee and James Rodger – were appointed to teach tonic sol-fa at the male and female teacher training colleges in Cape Town (*Mus Her* 1894, p. 263). All teacher trainees were required to pass a sight-singing test which was examined by Nixon. For over twenty years Nixon as Inspector of Music appears to have propagated tonic sol-fa at every opportunity, including a period which he devoted to teaching singing to the local Hottentot people (*Mus Her* 1894, p. 263).

By 1895 Arthur Lee, who was also an ardent tonic sol-fa-ist, had established a choir of 600 children from government schools in the Cape Town area. Examinations of the Tonic Sol-fa College appear to have been widely promoted in Cape Town schools, as completion of the Junior Certificate was a prerequisite for choir membership (*Sch Mus Rev* 1895, p. 116). The following year choir numbers had increased to 700 and, at its annual concert in Cape Town, the choir was accompanied by an orchestra (*Sch Mus Rev* 1896, p. 137). The concert included an unrehearsed programme of hand-sign singing and sight-reading introduced by Thomas Muir, who as Superintendent General of Education, openly encouraged the adoption of tonic sol-fa in schools. However, in other parts of the Cape Colony – for example, Uitenhage near Port Elizabeth – where tonic sol-fa had been introduced to the indigenous population, the method was apparently not as popular among the European community because of its association with indigenous people and because of “other prejudices” (*Mus Her* 1896, pp. 55–56). By 1895 Muir, in his annual report as Superintendent General of Education, was able recount that 1,186 and 2,068 Tonic Sol-fa College certificates had been awarded respectively in 1894 and 1895 by local examiners acting with the approval of the education authorities (*Sch Mus Rev* 1896, p. 46).

By 1897 (some time after Nixon’s retirement) the Cape Colony had, for the purposes of school music at least, been divided into two “circuits”, which were inspected by Frederick Farrington (Eastern Districts) and Arthur Lee (Western Districts). Both men were strong advocates of tonic sol-fa. Frederick Farrington emigrated from North Staffordshire to South Africa in 1893 and the following year was appointed as Inspector of Music for the Cape Colony. With the division of the music inspectorate into two “circuits”, Farrington was based in the Port Elizabeth-Uitenhage area and, within a year of his arrival, over 3,500 children were being taught singing by tonic sol-fa. He also introduced school choir competitions, which survived in Port Elizabeth until 1912–13 (Malan 1979b, p. 98). Farrington also promoted choral music in the indigenous community and, with E. Smedley-Williams, organised a Native Musical Association in East London and instituted choral singing competitions (Henning 1979b, p. 57).

Arthur Lee came from Birstall near Leeds, trained as a teacher at Westminster Training College and briefly taught in London before emigrating to South Africa (*Mus Her* 1898, p. 269). He was a teacher in a government school in Cape Town before being appointed as one of two instructors for the teacher training colleges in Cape Town and later as Inspector of Singing for the Western Province. After three years of working in Cape Town, Lee extended his promotion of tonic sol-fa to the whole province, undertaking extensive tours to inspect rural farm schools and native mission schools, as well as

schools in more populous centres. Like Farrington, Lee actively promoted Tonic Sol-fa College certificate examinations (*Mus Her* 1914, p. 206).

In 1898 Farrington reported that “the powers of the natives are astonishing” and also remarked on “the quickness of the native children” in mission schools where “it is not uncommon to find all the available blackboard space covered with hymns and anthems” (*Sch Mus Rev* 1898, pp. 23–23.). Both inspectors reported continuing success with examinations for Tonic Sol-fa College certificates, with 498 being awarded in the Eastern Districts and 1,244 awarded in the Western Districts by 1898 (*Sch Mus Rev* 1898, pp. 23–23, 33). The following year (1899) the number of Tonic Sol-fa College certificates awarded in the Eastern Districts increased to 736 and the number in Western Districts almost doubled to 2,179 (*Sch Mus Rev* 1899, pp. 63–64, 102).

One of the traditions in school music established in Cape Town in 1897 was the Annual School Choir Competition (for the Challenge Shield), which was organised under the auspices of Thomas Muir as Inspector-General of Education (*Sch Mus Rev* 1898, pp. 118–119). Although open to all schools, those competing appear to have been confined to “superior” European schools such as the Normal College School, Good Hope Seminary, Trinity Public School and Rondebosch Girls’ High School. Similar school choir competitions were established elsewhere in the Cape Colony, including the Municipal Challenge Shield at Port Elizabeth. However, at the 1898 Port Elizabeth choir competition there were entrants from “mixed” schools, with mention being made of the typical indigenous teacher who conducts his choir, “never looking harassed, but smilingly happy”, and who had frequently composed his own songs, both music and words (*Sch Mus Rev* 1899, p. 111).

Thus, by the close of the 19th century tonic sol-fa had had a major impact, not only on music in public school education, but also in mission schools, teacher training institutions and local communities.

THE INFLUENCE OF A COLONIAL PAST ON CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN CHORAL MUSIC AND MUSICAL IDENTITY

Over a century later the legacy of choral music making – based largely on the dissemination of tonic sol-fa through large-scale missionary activity and school education – has been lauded by several writers. Van Wyk (1998, p. 23) asserts that:

Choral singing is without any doubt the most popular and populous musical endeavour in South Africa at the present time, and most especially amongst the Black Communities ... The choral movement has played a significant role in educating people, and has had an empowering political function as well.

He points out that indigenous choirs “devote large chunks of their lives to choral music” and that one of the major factors that motivates them is participation in choral competitions and festivals. The most prominent of these have included the Caltex-Cape Argus Festival held in May in Cape Town, the two Nation Building Massed Choir Festivals held in Johannesburg in September and in Durban in November, the Sasol Choral Festival held in August in Bloemfontein, the Transnet Stica (South African Tertiary Institutions Choral Association) Competition held in Johannesburg in September, and the Old Mutual National Choir Festival with finals in Johannesburg in November (Khumalo 1998). More recently, Olwage (2002, p. 45) has acknowledged “black choralism’s compelling presence in contemporary South Africa – it is the largest participatory form of musicking in the country”. Moreover, Lucia (2005, p. xvi) states in her Introduction to *The world of South African music: A reader* that “choralism is phenomenally popular, involving almost half the country’s population and catering for schoolchildren of all ages, as well as adults in two huge categories of the national competition circuit that unfolds throughout the year”.

According to Mngoma (1990), Africans have had a tendency to “indigenise” certain Western music traits and have successfully adopted and adapted many aspects of Western music. Indeed, as part of an analysis of various forms of African classical music, Mngoma (1990) identifies one of these styles as follows:

... [it] involves the large volume of vernacular texts arranged to vocal music of the tonic sol-fa system. Most of these texts are historical, though some are topical, and include political and social commentaries. Such music is now standard for school church and community choral contests. This practice was introduced by missionary schools towards the end of the last century (p. 122).

Although tonic sol-fa is now widely used as both a choral teaching method and as a means of music notation, there is little or no documentation of its use nor any evidence of research – past or present – into either the extent or the nature of its use. However, research undertaken during 2004 sought to remedy this situation. It involved the collection of data for a case study of the contemporary uses and applications of tonic sol-fa in choral music practice in the Cape Town area. The research took the form of a collective case study which focused on the commonalities and/or differences in the perceptions of, attitudes to, and other factors relating to the use of tonic sol-fa among the seven choir directors participating in the research. Data collection involved semi-structured interviews with the choir directors and, although the fourteen questions included in the interview schedule were based on several potential themes and issues

derived from the literature and from discussions with academic and professional colleagues, only two or three of the emergent issues are relevant in the present context.⁴

These are related the extent to which tonic sol-fa is currently used in township communities and its likely future in South African choral music. Here there were several differing opinions expressed by participants:

[All the churches in my area], they all use [tonic sol-fa] ... community choirs, they're all using tonic sol-fa ... But now some of the kids attending school ... they are taking music [and using the modern system – staff notation] ... but when they're singing in the township, they're singing tonic sol-fa. (Interviewee E)

[tonic sol-fa] is going to grow because the black kids who are so interested in music now have to have this foundation which is there [in] tonic sol-fa ... with the black communities, I mean, we think it's ours (tonic sol-fa is ours). And there is no way we can sing without those tones (Sol-fa syllables) – I'm glad that they (the choir kids) [get to] know tonic sol-fa because it's the one thing that's kept me going. It is the one [thing] that has taught me how to learn staff notation very quickly. (Interviewee C)

Actually, most of the choirs in townships ... use tonic sol-fa – [in fact] all of them. You'd only find, you'd rarely find, a person who was "true" around staff notation. Mostly it would either be the conductor or [be] around two persons in the choir ... My take [on the future of tonic sol-fa] is that it's going to be the main feature ... Although a lot of people are forgetting [tonic sol-fa] themselves ... they can learn the staff notation ... but it (tonic sol-fa) is still going to be a main feature for some time. (Interviewee B)

However, the research did reveal a significant movement, particularly among the directors of better established choirs which participate in competitions, for their members to become literate in staff notation. The major argument in support of this was the more universal use of staff notation which, it was felt, greatly “empowered” local choirs when singing with other overseas choirs – thereby overcoming the “notational isolation” that tonic sol-fa admittedly represents. An additional factor which emerged as an entirely valid educational reason for moving to staff notation was in school situations where students were aiming for tertiary music courses that required literacy in staff notation as a prerequisite. Many advocated the use of dual notation which could provide “the best of both worlds”. Nevertheless, when it came to the composing and arranging work that choir directors undertook themselves, most indicated that their “compositional thinking”, particularly for an African style of music, was in tonic sol-fa, although their writing out of music was often in staff notation. Indeed many compared

⁴ For the full report of this research, see Stevens (2005).

the “language” of tonic sol-fa pitch syllables as being analogous to thinking in their first language (Xhosa) and yet speaking and/or writing their thoughts in English.

For most of the choir directors, there still appeared to be a future role for tonic sol-fa in their communities albeit that, for some, there has been increasing pressure to promote staff notation for younger generations of choristers. In the meantime the compromise achieved through the system of dual notation, now well established in South African choral music publishing—particularly in the case of music prepared for massed choir festivals and choral competitions (so-called *amakwaya* or “competition music”) – ensures that music in tonic sol-fa is still available for those who are literate in this notation.

As already stated, the major contention of this paper is that, because the indigenous communities across South Africa have over the past one hundred and fifty years adopted and adapted tonic sol-fa to “make it their own”, the method represents an exogenous aspect which has had a generally positive influence on South African musical culture. Aside from the reality of current choral music practice, what are the features of the tonic sol-fa method and its notation that support this contention?

It may be argued that, of all the forms of Western European music, hymn singing is by its nature an essentially communal rather than individual musical activity. This correlates with the approach taken by indigenous African societies to music as “social sharing and participation”. Indeed it is the effect of music in promoting “community living and reciprocity” that typifies the notion of *ubuntu*. Moreover, one of the reasons why African people appear to have so readily embraced hymn singing and continue to relate to the four-part harmonic choral idiom may well have been the “communal focus” and “spiritual unity” implied by hymnody as a manifestation of the Christian lifestyle. Hymnody supported by the tonic sol-fa system could therefore be said to represent a fusion of traditional African indigenous culture and Western European tonal-harmonic idiom.

Specifically in relation to tonic sol-fa notation, its founder, John Curwen, deliberately kept the level of theoretical complexity to a minimum so that tonic sol-fa notation, when taught according to post-1872 and pre-1901 editions of *The Standard Course*, effectively by-passed the difficulties associated with staff notation and instead relied on an implicit association of the symbol (specifically the letter notation of the solmisation syllables) with its sound (initially at least as sol-fa syllables). In this way the tonic sol-fa system was at least closer to the indigenous ways of practice, typified by an oral tradition, than staff notation. Further, whereas European art music could be said to have a highly individualistic aesthetic and/or performance focus and indeed may be characterised as

being “overly-intellectualised” (partly perhaps as a result of its tendency towards being socially elitist), the tonic sol-fa approach to choral singing, which has comparatively less intellectual focus *per se*, represents a closer correlation to the African notion of practical involvement and the fusion of performer and product.

The printing of music for massed choir festivals and choral competitions in dual staff and tonic sol-fa notation, as well as the selection of a repertoire of African “vernacular” songs could be interpreted as representing two “culturally inclusive” aspects of the choral music tradition in South Africa. Despite the fact that, as Lucia (2005, p. xvi, citing Barber 1995, p. 12) points out, the degree of music literacy (both music and text literacy) among her own estimate of twenty million choir members in South Africa is difficult to estimate (she poses the question: “How many of them half-read the text – words and music – tonic solfa [sic] sheet music?”), nevertheless the equal status accorded to tonic sol-fa notation is at least responsive to the choral heritage of indigenous South Africans.

In comparison with other countries where staff-based methods of teaching music literacy have often had little or no real effect in raising or even maintaining the levels of music literacy in the general community, it has been argued that the continued use of tonic sol-fa by indigenous choral groups and church choirs since its introduction during the 19th century has generally been a positive feature of South African community music making. Indeed, the case has recently been put for a wider use of tonic sol-fa in developing countries, where Western music—or adaptations of Western (tonal) music—is used in schools and community choral music (Stevens 2003b). Ease of learning a system where the pitch mnemonic is an integral part of the notation, where the pitch and rhythmic dimensions are combined into a single spatial dimension, and where there is no necessity to learn the theory of music to be musically literate, has merit in promoting amateur music making in the contemporary context. As its founder quite rightly asserted through the motto of the movement, the tonic sol-fa method is “Easy, Cheap and True”, and in South Africa, its adoption, adaptation and indiginisation by local community choirs has resulted in the development of a community-based musical culture that is thoroughly consistent with what John Curwen had in mind when he devised and promoted the method. As such, it represents a significant exogenous aspect of the contemporary South African musical identity.

REFERENCES

- Agawu, K. 2003. *Representing African music: Postcolonial notes, queries, positions*. New York: Routledge.

- Akrofi, E.A. 2003. Tonal harmony as a colonizing force on the music of South Africa. A paper presented to the Swedish South African Research Network (SSARN) seminar on The impact of political systems on African music and music education, Pretoria, South Africa, September 18–19, 2003.
- Barber, K. 1995. African-language literature and postcolonial criticism. *Research in African Literacies*, 26(4) (Winter 1995).
- Gandhi, M.K. 1905. Education among the Kaffirs. *Indian Opinion* (30 December 1905), in *Complete work of Mahatma Gandhi*, Vol. 5.
<http://mkgandhi.org/vol5/ch045.htm> [Date of access: 13 April, 2001].
- Henning, C.G. 1979a. Daines, Thomas. In J. P. Malan (ed.), *South African music encyclopedia*, Vol. I. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Henning, C.G. 1979b. Farrington, Frederick. In J. P. Malan (ed.), *South African music encyclopedia*, Vol. II. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Hollar, S.D. 2001. *The story of Christian music*, Chapter 33, 170–176.
http://www.vts.edu/Spring_Semester_2001/LMA/SCM170-176.htm [Date of access: 12 October, 2003].
- Joseph, D.Y. 2005. Localising indigenous knowledge systems down under: Sharing different worlds with one voice. *African Journal of Indigenous Knowledge Systems: A Cross-pollination and Critique*, 4(1), pp. 295–305.
- Khumalo, M. 1998. Choirs. 1998 *Guide to South African arts, culture and heritage*.
<http://www.artsdiary.org.za/guide/choirs.html> [Date of access: 2 May, 2001].
- Kirby, P.R. 1979. Sontonga, Enoch, in J. P. Malan (ed.), *South African music encyclopedia*, Vol. IV. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Lucia, C. (Ed.) 2005. *The world of South African music: A reader*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholar's Press.
- Malan, J.P. 1979a. Bokwe, John Knox. In J. P. Malan (ed.), *South African music encyclopedia*, Vol. I. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Malan, J.P. 1979b. Port Elizabeth, Music in (1820–1920). In J. P. Malan (ed.), *South African music encyclopedia*, Vol. IV. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Mngoma, K. 1990. The teaching of music in South Africa. *South African Journal of Musicology* 10, pp. 121–126.
- Nettel, R. 1944. *Music in the five towns 1840–1914: A study of the social influence of music in an industrial district*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Nixon, H. 1898. *The tonic sol-fa system: What is it?* Cape Town, South Africa: Townshend, Taylor and Snashall.
- Nzewi, M. 1999. Strategies for music education in Africa: Towards a meaningful progression from tradition to modern. *International Journal of Music Education*, 33, pp. 72–87.
- Olwage, G. 2002. Scriptions of the choral: The historiography of black South African choralism. *South African Journal of Musicology*, 22, pp. 29–45.
- Rainbow, B. 1980. *John Curwen: A short critical biography*. Sevenoaks, Kent: Novello.

- Stevens, R.S. 2005. Tonic sol-fa in contemporary choral music practice: A South African case study. In P. DeVries (ed.), *Proceedings of the XXVIIIth Annual Conference of the Australian Association for Research in Music Education*. Sydney: AARME.
- Stevens, R.S. 2003a. Easy, cheap and true: The case for promoting the Curwen Method of teaching choral singing in developing countries. In L.C.R. Yip, C.C. Leung & W.T. Lau (eds.), *Curriculum innovation in music. Fourth Asia-Pacific symposium on music education research*, pp. 343–348. Hong Kong: Department of Creative Arts, Hong Kong Institute of Education.
- Stevens, R.S. 2003b. The case for a revival of tonic sol-fa in the twenty-first century. In N. Jeanneret (ed.) *Proceedings of the XXIIIrd annual conference of the Australian Association for Research in Music Education* (2001), 172–182. Newcastle (NSW): AARME.
- Shepherd, R.H.W. 1941. *Lovedale, South Africa: The story of a century, 1841–1941*. Lovedale, Cape Province, South Africa: The Lovedale Press.
- The Tonic Sol-fa Reporter* 1862–1891. London: John Curwen and Sons (TSf Rep).
- The Musical Herald* 1892–1914. London: John Curwen and Sons (Mus Her).
- The School Music Review* 1892–1899. London: Novello and Company, Limited (Sch Mus Rev).
- Van Wyk, C. 1998. Choral singing in South Africa. *South African Music Teacher Magazine*, 132, p. 23.

MUSIC IN THE ITALIAN PRISONER OF WAR CAMPS IN SOUTH AFRICA DURING THE SECOND WORLD WAR¹

Donato Somma, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa

ABSTRACT

Up to 90,000 Italian prisoners spent the war years in South African prisoner of war camps. Cultural productions of varying kinds flourished in these camps. The central issue addressed in this essay is the relationship between music and the construction of a set of identities under these circumstances. Music's role in this reorientation of identity can be deduced from the amount of time and effort spent on the production of lavish operettas and the creation of musical instruments out of virtually nothing. The prisoners' legacy to the Italian-South African community is a collection of stories and myths that tell of the cunning of Italian prisoners in the face of adversity – the stories of unlikely, musical, war heroes. By employing theories of myth analysis, the changes that these prisoners went through are traced and documented. Primary sources include interviews with surviving ex-prisoners and an examination of archive materials, both private and public.

This essay introduces a number of questions that have emerged from my research in music at the Italian prisoner of war camps (POW hereafter) in South Africa. The aim is to demonstrate how stories about music function as the frame through which the ethos of the camp has been communicated. It begins with a brief history of Zonderwater, the largest of these South African camps for Italian POWs, followed by an introduction to the discussion of myth and the central role that music, as cultural practice, played in the prisoners' mythologising of their experience. This is followed by two specific examples of music in the mythology of the camp. I will expand upon their illustration of specific aspects of Italian identity and the problems around the notion of that identity.

¹ I would like to acknowledge the support of the Student Publication Project, Graduate School for Humanities and Social Sciences, Witwatersrand University.

INTRODUCTION TO ZONDERWATER

During the Second World War many Italian soldiers were captured in North Africa by the Union Defence Forces of South Africa and, in accordance with the Geneva Convention, were sent to the country whose troops had captured them for the duration of their internment. Zonderwater (Dutch: “without water”) was the largest Italian prisoner of war camp in South Africa and the southern hemisphere during World War II. When the first Italian prisoners of war arrived in South Africa, after crushing defeats by the South African forces in North Africa, the area of Zonderwater, west of Pretoria, was a wasteland. Mario Gazzini, an ex-POW, described it thus: “On a windswept deserted plain of South Africa ...” (in Moni 1989, cassette 1). The first arrived in 1941 and the last left in 1947. During those seven years the lifeless Zonderwater, whose very name implies hardship, became a bustling town of up to one hundred thousand Italian men of varying ages, as well as African guards, and English and Afrikaans officers and administrators.

Following the precepts of the Geneva Convention to the letter, the camp management focused on the humane treatment of their captives, allowing an order to emerge naturally. With this ethos as a backdrop, the camp began to produce a lively spectrum of recreational activities in the endless fight against boredom and depression. Relying on donations, theft, cunning and charm, the Italian prisoners managed to beg, borrow and steal all they needed to create large brass bands, varied ensembles, orchestras and even operettas. Theatre productions, art exhibitions, elementary and secondary schooling, artisan training, goods manufacturing, sports, food production and many other things filled the prisoners’ days. The cultural activities of these Italian prisoners of war were allowed to develop in the South African camps with very little interference, and often with the active support of the camp management, concerned as it was with the need to maintain peace in the camps. An essential component of this activity was musical, and it is this musical activity that was, I argue, crucial to the “history lesson” that the POWs wished to be learnt from the camp in the post-war era – a lesson in which artistic activity, as a marker of civilisation, flourished with the Italians in their imprisonment.

THE FUNCTION OF THE MYTH COMPLEX IN CREATING A HISTORY OF THE CAMP

In examining the traces left by the Italian prisoners in archives, libraries and personal memories, an image of life during their internment emerges. In addition to these traces, there is the annual ritual in the form of a memorial service that is enacted at the camp cemetery every year, which includes a Catholic mass, laying of wreaths for the fallen and also the performance of songs that have come to be associated with the camp. This

image emerges from, and is worked through, a myth complex woven around the historical event by the prisoners themselves, many of whom went to great lengths to mould the image of themselves in both the broader public imagination and that of the South African Italian community. The myth complex, and the perpetuated perception of the “image” of Zonderwater, are so well integrated that they are inseparable.

The term “myth” is used here with reference to the Barthesian conception of myth as the process whereby nature replaces history (Barthes 1993, p. 11). Through this process the determining factors of history are naturalised (portrayed as given) through narrative. My own term “myth complex” signifies the conceptual link between the various narratives that have accumulated around the Italian POW experience. These narratives are often centred on an object or event from the period of the POWs’ internment. The analysis of these objects or events takes its cue from the method employed by Barthes in his *Mythologies* (1957), wherein the unpacking of “current social phenomena” (Barthes 1993, p. 11) serves to redefine myth as language. Flagging the constructedness of the myth complex is necessary at this point as the Zonderwater experience, as mediated through the myths, has been a defining factor in the articulation of the Italian community in South Africa since the Second World War.

The main agency for the construction, or mythologising, was the Zonderwater Block Association, which for many years was the organisation that promoted, perpetuated and protected the memory of the prisoners at the Zonderwater camp, and to a lesser extent that of the other camps. The way that this myth complex has been used over the years is through a two-stream process, at once producing literature or media articles from the myths, and reaffirming the myth and its integrity at the annual memorial service held at the camp. The myth complex is comprised of stories about life in the camp that have emerged over the years. These stories are bound together by the need of the POWs to represent themselves in specific ways. This has led to an unspoken agreement between the various interest groups involved in the Zonderwater story, as to what is to be included and excluded from the myth complex. The resultant image is highly stylised, drawing, I argue, on many thematic threads that run through the mythology and folk cultures of Italy and Europe. The level to which the prisoners were aware of the historical line from which these threads are drawn is an issue I will interrogate.

The image of the POWs that is generated is at once humble and heroic. Both of these qualities can be linked to particular qualities that were, and still are to some extent, evident in Italian society. The culture of the *bella figura* is as much a part of Italian culture today as it was during the Second World War. Like the Arab concept of “face”, it places a high value on a given individual, family or community presenting a respectable façade to the world at all costs, regardless of what lies below the surface (Richards 1995,

pp. 19–20). The POWs, feeling the need to present themselves in the best light, turned their internment into an opportunity to validate themselves. The reason for the complexity of the myth constructed by the prisoners stems in part from the complexity of their multiple roles as soldiers, prisoners, Fascists or non-Fascists (that is soldiers for whom Fascism was either a means to an end or simply not important to them as an ideology), family men, entrepreneurs and survivors. The paradoxes of this image are expressed in various Italian folktales, especially those dealing with the oppressed.² This precedent in their cultural heritage allowed the POWs simply to insert the details of their stories into a pre-existing narrative form. This will be illustrated in *The Story of a Violin* below.

A specific aim of the myth complex that has grown around the Zonderwater experience (which is not addressed in the analysis below) is to perpetuate a quality that was, and is, articulated by the ex-POWs and their families – namely the Zonderwater Spirit.

That which was called the spirit of Zonderwater was thus born in these unfortunate years: a reciprocal desire of, besides overcoming the effects of a war between two nations which were not – and never had been – in conflict, above all creating a new understanding and a new friendship between two peoples so alike in many respects.
(Sani 1992, p. 301)

The myth complex is not only significant as the illustration of the prisoners' lives – a collection of autobiographism – it is also the origin myth of a significant portion of the present South African Italian community. Its fundamental role is the founding myth of post-war Italianness in South Africa.

I have thus far discussed the myth complex as a whole, but it is in fact constituted of materials that appear in various media and are archived at various places. There are annotated photograph albums and artefacts in the National Military History Museum in Johannesburg – a mass of paperwork, art, literature and memorabilia in the archive of the camp (at the Zonderwater cemetery) that is only now being restored and catalogued. In addition to these archives, there are books on the subject, a film documentary and personal accounts in English and Italian. Also the various structures built by the

² The potential power of peasant resistance through narrative is at the heart of the theory of subaltern classes and their politics. "Folklore was scarcely a dilettante amusement for Gramsci; he called it a vernacular *concezione del mondo e della vita*, a conception of the world and of life that challenged the hegemony of the educated classes. For genuine revolution, and for the necessary organic bond between theory and practice, Gramsci advised the intellectuals who define dominant beliefs that the beliefs of subaltern classes are different" (Birnbaum 1993, p. 19).

prisoners such as roads, bridges, farm buildings, churches and the actual internment sites around the country have accrued their own micro myth complexes that form a part of the oral and official histories of the surrounding communities. It is this body of material that, when taken together, forms the overarching narrative that is the subject of my research. The particular type of heroism and its significance for the post-war identity of the POWs and their community emerges from the myth-complex as a whole. It is, however, most accessible on the micro level of the individual myths. They seem to convey the flair that characterises the myth complex most clearly.

Many of the most enduring legends of the camp deal with aspects of culture – stories about music are particularly prolific, as opposed to those dealing with the more dangerous issues relating to politics and ideology. This is because the South African Italian community, during and after the war, was always on the political defensive. As Fascists they were enemies of South Africa in the Second World War, and with the rise of Afrikaner nationalism after the war, they were expected to share the nationalist aspirations of that movement. Ultimately, therefore, the cultural sphere became the forum in which Italians in South Africa chose to voice their Italianness. In this essay I have attempted to illustrate how the work of the myth is best accomplished through a musical frame. How it is that the “musical imperative”, imagined as central to Italianness by Italian and South African alike, was evoked to excuse acts of subversion.

One method of exploring the significance of the individual narratives as myths is comparative. Drawing on characters from Italian and European folklore, I have picked those that have some resonance with the characters of the POW stories. The comparison here is between the Italian soldier and a figure from folklore – in this case, the trickster character of Western lore, the fox. This juxtaposition highlights specific qualities of the Italian POW which I feel have been emphasised in their mythologising of their experience. The Italianness of these qualities will also be discussed. The image of the cunning, roguish Italian prisoner, with all his charms of persuasion, gypsy-like savvy and adaptability, emerges from Italian POW legends time and time again. *The Story of a Violin* and *The Banjo Poem* below demonstrate the valorisation of these characteristics very clearly.

THE STORY OF A VIOLIN

The following is a reproduction of the original text and a translation.

G. Pasetti

Storia di un violino

Page 1

*Sulla panca lo sprimbocche (1)
sta leggendo il bollettino
mentre dietro, capolino
sta facendo un prigionier.*

Page 2

*Guarda il caso! Il prigioniero (5)
è un liutaio rinomato,
quella panca l'ha stregato
quindi coglie l'occasione.*

Page 3

*Rischia aime' la cosa rossa (9)
e così piano pianino
fa' sparire il malandrino
quella panca e se ne va.*

Page 4

*Col martello e lo scapello (13)
batte e taglia con ardore
ed in capo a poche ore
terminato è il suo lavor.*

Page 5

*Pizzicando lo strumento (17)
lui s'avvede al accordo
che il violino è un poco sordo:
sembra un gatto nell' amor.*

Page 6

*Ed allor con furberia (21)
Per aver molti danari
Dice:, – questo Stradivari
è un modello original!! –*

Page 7

*Lo sprimbocche dice: – gudde!! (25)
ha una voce ch'è un portento
yes!! Io pago lo strumento
tre sterline! very well!! –*

Page 8

*Questa storia che ho contato (29)
è una storia originale
capitata a un certo tale
e quel tale sono me.*

Story of a violin

On a bench the springbok
Sits reading a paper.
Meanwhile behind him
A prisoner looks on.

Look what's going on! The prisoner
Is a renowned luthier,
He likes that bench
Therefore he seizes the opportunity.

He risks, alas, the dangerous cause
And so quietly
The scoundrel makes the bench disappear.

With hammer and knife
He feverishly cuts and hammers
And after a few hours
Finishes his work.

Plucking the instrument
He comes to the decision
That the violin is a bit dull:
It sounds like a cat in love.

And so, cunningly
To make lots of money
He says: "This Stradivarius
Is an original model!!"

The springbok says: "Good!!
It has a marvellous voice.
Yes!! I will pay three pounds sterling!
Very well!!"

This story that I have told
Is an original story
That happened to a certain person
and that person is me.

Italian POWs at Zonderwater created a number of violins during the war. These were professional luthiers whose violins were made for the violinists of the camp, some of whom were well known in Italy. There was the violin made by Luigi Galiussi that was returned to its maker in Italy in the 1980s. In an article on this violin, mention is made of the various materials and methods that were necessary to make a violin in a POW camp (Paratus 1983). It was the difficulty involved in the creation of a sophisticated instrument like a violin that made these instruments remarkable, and earned them, and the stories of their creation, a place in the myth complex of Zonderwater. The difficulties of making a violin in a POW camp also contribute, I argue, to the violin acting as a signifier of cultural leverage – an object that was, and still is, seen by the POWs, as a marker of cultural superiority. The violin narratives, as well as the violins themselves, serve as a visual sign of the Italianness of the camp. Like the “insistent fringes” of Mankiewicz’s Romans in his film *Julius Caesar* – as commented upon by Barthes (1993) – the sign formed by the violins and the frequent recounting of their stories leaves no room for doubt. They proudly declare that these prisoners were musical, civilised people, unstoppable in their quest to maintain culture. This myth speaks directly to the particularly Italian desire to make a *bella figura* against all odds.

The specific story discussed below is of the violin made by the luthier Pasetti at Zonderwater. The discussion focuses on a story that Pasetti wrote about the creation of the violin. The original text is an undated manuscript in the Zonderwater Museum. Beautifully illustrated, each page contains a quatrain in Italian describing the events depicted in a vividly coloured pencil drawing. Not much is known about the luthier Pasetti as an individual other than that he was a prisoner at Zonderwater. His violin and the story that goes with it are a central myth of the Zonderwater canon. The reason for its importance is that it includes all the elements of a good Zonderwater tale. Over the past year and a half, almost every person that I have spoken to in connection with this research has asked if I know the story of “the violin”. Of the numerous violins made in the camp (and their narratives), the particular story of Pasetti’s violin has become representative and contains most of the elements that make up other violin narratives of the Zonderwater camp. This particular narrative serves as the story for a number of violins that are kept at the Zonderwater museum. A copy of the story is kept in the display case with two violins and a mandolin. The fact that this story is one of the first to surface in any discussion of Zonderwater indicates that something about it is representative of the Zonderwater experience. The story is emblematic of at least three aspects of Zonderwater lore. The first is the Italian POWs’ ingenuity (the actual manufacturing of the violin out of a bench) and cunning (to sell it back to the rightful owner of the bench and make a profit). The second is the weaving of the story into the

myth complex and thus disseminating it among the Italian South African, as well as certain South African and Italian, communities. The third is the “working” of the myth, using the story and the object itself to illustrate particular aspects of the character and spirit of Zonderwater POWs (aspects that speak to a specific Italianness). This myth’s journey illustrates the way in which many of the individual Zonderwater stories work through the myth complex to promote the image I have referred to above.

The hero of this particular story is a shrewd young Italian *con furberia* (line 21) – *furbo* translates as “cunning; clever; shrewd” (Andrews 1986, p. 76). His ability to trick his captors, who occupy the position of power, or to come out on top is viewed in a most favourable light by ex-prisoners and the community who preserve their memory. As ex-POW Albertini exclaimed, “No. The Italian! Look, let me tell you this. We can be full of it. We can be ... but as far as brains are concerned” (Albertini, author’s interview, 2006). This indicates his belief that above all traits attributed to the Italian, intelligence must top the list. Another description indicates a character very closely linked, in terms of mythic characterisation, with the trickster character of Western lore – the fox. This is evident in the use of the word *Malandrino* (“scoundrel”, line 11). Like its English equivalent, *Malandrino* is not an entirely negative term – it implies naughty more than bad, a disruptive but harmless character. While the fox leaves chaos in his wake and disturbs the peace of those around him, he remains if not loveable, then at least a character worthy of admiration in the lexicon of Western anthropomorphic creatures. His ability to make good in a difficult situation and take advantage of the flaws of his fellow creatures – the vanity of the crow, the competitiveness of the bear and the lion, as illustrated in Aesop’s Fables (Zipes 1996) – make him the hero of the underdog, a favourite cause in Italian folklore. It is perhaps this love of a good underdog story, so evident Italian folklore, that provided the model for the mythologising of Zonderwater. There is a long-established tradition in Italy of stories that vindicate the peasant, the poor, the hermit and the weak. Lucia Chiavola Birnbaum, in her work on the black Madonnas of Italy, recounts the Sicilian story of comar Giovanuzza:¹

The origin of injustice in the world is conveyed in a fable, “La Parita di Giovanuzza” about comar Giovanuzza, godmother fox. When the lord created animals he asked each of them to choose a virtue. Comar Giovanuzza presented herself to the lord and said she wanted strength, whereupon Silvestro, the wolf, said that strength belonged to him. So comar Giovanuzza asked the lord for impudence, whereupon a fly lit upon her head and said that was her virtue. The fox, having watched the strong and the impudent appropriate the virtues she wanted, asked for shrewdness. The fable concludes with a statement of peasant resistance to an unjust society: “You with the

¹ Comar is the Sicilian for godmother.

*hats have taken over by force and impudence; we who wear berets will survive with shrewdness". (Adapted from Varvaro's *Lingua e storia in Sicilia*. n.d., in Birnbaum 1993, pp. 60–61).*

This story is representative of the trope in peasant Italian folklore that values cunning as the peasant's only weapon and ultimately his virtue. The traits attributed to the fox in many of the foundational texts of Western lore and popular imagination, such as Aesop, are clearly along the lines of this type of trickster character, and many of these traits are very deeply ingrained in the Italian national character, although the existence of such a character would probably be denied by most Italians. This is because the notion of an Italian character, that is a character identifiable throughout the peninsula, has always been problematic. It is argued that Italy's fiercely-defended regional identities have prevented the development of a national character in what is a very young political entity (the unification of Italy occurred late in the 19th century). The problem of Italian national identity is, in its present form, as old as the Italian state – that is, the political entity which emerged from the *Risorgimento*. It is still a contentious issue in Italy, and so it is necessary to discuss Italianness as a changing concept through the past century and a half in order to give some context to the small community of Italian POWs whose Italian (as well as personal) identity is the subject of this research. Therefore the following paragraphs will serve as a very brief introduction to some of the features that characterise Italians as a nation, emphasising 20th-century traits that, I argue, have emerged from past "Italys" – "Italys" that communicated with stories.

Although it is not known if he phrased it this way or not, Massimo D'Azeglio's phrase "With Italy made, we must now make the Italians" (quoted in Forgacs and Lumley 1996, p. 19), allegedly uttered in 1861, has been resurrected for many discussions around Italy, Italians and *Italianità*, or "Italianness". Since unification the problem has been further complicated by the views of Italian emigrants and other marginal "Italian" voices adding their flavour to the concept of Italy. However, certain traits have emerged from the socio-economic history of ruralism, poverty, misrule and general hardship common to most regions of Italy. The resulting approach to life is well articulated, not surprisingly, in a book on Italian cooking, and while it applies specifically to Neapolitans, it is applicable to Italians of many regions:

Neapolitans – for all Campanians are Neapolitans at heart – have over the centuries perfected l'arte d'arrangiarsi (the art of getting on with it, against all odds). It is this which gives them their spirit and sense of fun, yet allows them to prosper (Harris 1993, p. 11).

Included in the list of admired traits are mistrust and an often blatant disrespect for authority, and the notion that it is acceptable to break the rules if it means survival and/or betterment of one's lot. The unflattering composite that results is, in part, the basis of Italy's reputation for decadence. A corrupting influence on those who surrender themselves to the culture of bribery and kickback bureaucracy that passes for order in Italy. Such accusations of graft come, not only from outside observers, but are also a constant complaint and topic of discussion in Italy itself, where many intellectuals, journalists, clergy and politicians have taken strong moral stands against the broad-based corruption in Italian life. Particularly well expressed examples include Italo Calvino's *Apologo Sull'onesta nel Paese dei Corrotti* ("An Apology for Honesty in the Country of Corrupt Men" (1982), and the graffiti that appeared on the entrance into his city (Milan) days after the breaking of a story of city-wide corruption that rocked Italy in the closing decades of the last century; it read: *Benvenuti a Tangentopoli* "Welcome to Bribesville" (Richards 1995, p. 30). While bribery and corruption are contentious ethical issues in peace time when civil liberties are intact, such practices seem to have been celebrated in the POW camps in South Africa, where the Italians' ingenuity and creativity in frustrating the efforts of anyone attempting to impose order were seemingly justified by the futility of their war in Africa and their imprisonment for fighting for their country.

Pasetti's record of his story draws so many of these character traits together. On the first page we see the ready humour with which he undermines the power of his prisoner. Not "captor", "enemy", or even "soldier", but a "springbok" in reference to the heraldic animal associated with the Union Defence Force of the day. This springbok is to prove the butt of the joke, and so complete is the author's control of the situation that the nickname "springbok" is itself Italianised by rendering it in Italian spelling *sprimbocche*. On page two the action begins. Seeing the potential (yet another indication of the Italian's genius for seizing opportunity), the prisoner of the first page, a "renowned luthier", seizes his opportunity. We are not told how, but the "scoundrel makes the bench disappear". According to Giovanni Albertini (Albertini, author's interview, 2004), Pasetti did this by telling the officer that there was someone on the phone for him. On his return the bench had disappeared and every inch of the camp was searched for weeks in an attempt to find the bench. Presumably someone knew about the theft but, not surprisingly, no one was talking. This relocates the activity of Pasetti from a private act of theft to a camp-wide act of subversion.

An interesting aspect worth noting here is that it is known that there was effective and lucrative legal trading in the camp. Anna Lupini says that Italians in Johannesburg sold items made in the camp and supplied prisoners with all manner of materials, ranging

from wood to needle and thread and pasta (Moni 1989, cassette 1). Why then, was a professional artisan stealing furniture to make violins? Worse still, Albertini claims that the hair for the bow of the violin was pilfered, one strand at a time, from the tail of a horse belonging to a certain Captain Tosi, a captain very well liked by the prisoners because he could speak Italian (Albertini, author's interview, 2004). The answer lies in the fact that the Italian prisoner validated himself as a man, and as an Italian, by constantly disregarding the authorities, affirming his freedom of choice by using wood literally stolen from under the warden, and hair from the tail of a horse, not just any horse, but a captain's horse. Such acts constituted a form of resistance – a cheeky, essentially harmless act of resistance that was meant to insult rather than antagonise. Again, the emphasis is shifted from the political sphere to the cultural. Their war already lost, the POWs waged a war of culture against their captors, determined to prove at every opportunity their capacity for civilised living.

Page four illustrates the skill of our renowned luthier. According to his own account, the violin was the product of a few hours work, a clear example of the mythologising of an event. Albertini seems to remember it as a matter of months. That aside, the test of the violin's worth is assessed on page five. On plucking the strings our hero comes to the conclusion that "It sounds like a cat in love". And then the final act of gumption – he attempts to sell the violin back to the *sprimbocche* for more than its worth as a Stradivarius model. The *sprimbocche* is firmly established as the butt of the joke when he not only pays for the violin but raves about its marvellous sound. On the eighth and final page the author reveals his identity as the maker. "And that person is me" draws the narrative to an end without any hint of guilt or embarrassment, but rather a strange satisfaction and even pride at his contribution to the body of "evidence" that amounts to an ego stroke for the clever prisoners and a subtle put-down of their captors. An indictment made all the more sweet by its situation in the realm of music – a realm that Italians past and present like to consider theirs exclusively.

The banjo poem

by Adriano Tosto

*When with the banjo, – that is my faithful friend, – I deceive my imprisonment time
and to the girls – now ancient remembrance –*

*I send my homesickfullness songs,
I even think to you, pretty young girl,
Although my song is vanishing. –*

The original text from which "The Banjo Poem" is taken is an autograph album that belonged to Joan Utley of Cape Town. Her father, Captain W.L. Wellard, was stationed in Abyssinia and was in charge of an Italian POW camp there. When he was reassigned,

the Italian prisoners – according to the letter by Utley (no date) that accompanied the album when it was submitted to the Museum of Military History² – wanted to present him with a gift. The Captain informed them that it was against military policy to accept gifts from prisoners, and so the POWs presented his wife and daughter with gifts to express their gratitude for his kindness. The gifts were a carved wooden box for the wife of the Captain, and enclosed was an autograph album with messages from the POWs for his daughter. The messages are mostly in Italian, with some in English. Each message in Italian has a small piece of paper attached with a translation. The translations for all the messages are in the same handwriting and so presumably were done by a single translator. It is almost certain that he was Italian as the translations are often direct translations from the Italian. The specific entry under discussion (translation quoted above) is by Adriano Tosto, POW Number 5638. Unlike many of the other authors, he gives no indication of his regiment or rank, and the absence of any mention of the Captain himself is representative of just under half the entries.

Although this camp was not in South Africa, it shared a key characteristic with Zonderwater that warrants its inclusion. The shared characteristic is the amicable relationship that developed between the camp command and the prisoners. The existence of the gifts, and the obvious warmth that is apparent on every page of the autograph album, stand as evidence of this relationship. This is not to say that the gifts did not further some political agenda, or were not intended to influence the Captain in some way. The distinction between self-preservation and personal feeling in the motivation behind the gifts is unclear, and this is part of not only its charm but of its function in a myth complex.

The album and box together form an archive of sentiment. As a second-order semiological system it functions as myth by transforming the individual entries from signs of language to signifiers of myth (cf. Barthes 1993, pp. 114–115). Individual messages are subsumed under the larger message of the myth. I have elected to analyse the following individual entry with the significance of the gift as a gesture in mind.

² Professor Mino R. Caira, President of the Zonderwater Block Association of ex-POWs for Cape Town and its Environs, made the donation. It was submitted to the Museum of Military History in Johannesburg in 1996 and attached was the cover letter by Joan Utley. These circumstances surrounding its inclusion in the Zonderwater archives at the museum indicate the dominant role that the Zonderwater Block Association played after the war in the gathering and dissemination of almost all the material from Italian POW camps, even some from camps that were not in South Africa. An additional example of this role is the fact that in the course of my research the present Zonderwater Block administrator, Mr Coccia, put me in contact with ex-POWs who were imprisoned in other African countries.

The album represents an act of resistance couched in a compliment – another manoeuvre that suggests the fox-like cunning of the Italian prisoner. The Italian prisoners successfully found a way around the rules (the real enemy of most Italians, then, as well as now) in order to thank the Captain for his kindness and did so with such flair that it could not be refused. We have therefore, an undermining of authority on three levels.

Firstly, they discovered a way to give gifts to the Captain after being told not to as it was against army rules. This is a clever undermining of the power that the Allies had over them as captives in that these were military rules and not really acceptable on a human level, so they were summarily ignored. Secondly, the gifts were addressed to mother and daughter in the knowledge that the contents of the album would be read by the Captain. Because it was addressed to women, the language used and the depth of emotion expressed are entirely different to what it would have been were it addressed to the Captain himself. The positions of aggressor, captive, Fascist and in fact all political and ideological positions are put aside and the result is very intimate expressions of the prisoners as people. Those who wrote in the album (and it is likely that some did not write) express, in their wishes for the captain's daughter's future, the feelings and hopes of fathers, husbands, brothers, sons and friends. Some entries make reference to loved ones left behind in Italy; others invoke the longing for home that must have resonated with the captain's family who were also far from home.

The war, as ideological struggle with moral implications, is noticeable by its absence. Since Italy's change of allegiance during the Second World War, some observers have noted a tendency among Italians to ignore unpleasant aspects of the past and suggest as an explanation that this was a sort of defence mechanism.³ This willingness to live with blind spots may explain to some extent the absence of any political expression or reference to the war other than to wish for its end. Another more practical reason could be self-preservation, not wanting to anger or antagonise their captors. It does seem, however, that the gifts involved far too much thought, care (the album is a substantial text, with twenty-eight entries) and highly personal expression to simply be a gift of propitiation. It is plausible then to read the album as an oblique critique of the war, or

³ This is addressed in Carlo Mazzantini's book *A Cercar la Bella Morte* (1986) in which the lack of broad-based Italian support for the Allies in 1943 is addressed. The book itself was largely ignored by the Italian public, as it did not tally with the foundational myth of the Italian Republic that it was born of partisan resistance to Fascist oppression. Mazzantini's main thesis, in the words of Richards, is "that Italians had never really come to terms with the past ... The Fascist period had simply been swept under the carpet ... Yet, he maintained, Fascism had sprung from a fertile Italian soil" (Richards 1995, p. 109).

war in more general terms. By addressing the wife and daughter of the Captain, the prisoners are free to express feelings that, in terms of popular imagination, would find a better reception in the “softer” hearts of women. The specific women to whom the gifts are given are chosen for maximum impact on the emotions of the Captain and those of his colleagues – which brings me to the third level of resistance to authority.

In crossing the line from what is essentially a professional relationship (in the military sense) – that is, the political dynamics of the Second World War driven by conflicting ideologies between nations—to a personal relationship (a crossing initiated by involving the Captain’s family), the Italian prisoners deliver their *coup de grace* to the circumstances which lock them in conflict with the Captain and the army he represents. It is not known to what extent the prisoners knew the Captain’s wife and daughter, but it is likely that contact would have been minimal to non-existent. Many of the entries begin by saying that the author wishes he had known her, or met her, indicating that there was no contact. This seems to be confirmed by this quote from Utley’s letter – “On my father’s desk was a photo of me at school” – suggesting the origin of the choice of the gifts’ recipients as “a small token of their affection for him” as opposed to any direct contact with them. The risk of involving his wife and child in their attempt to thank him was calculated and deemed to be safe enough to attempt, but it nonetheless flies in the face of the victor/defeated power structure that was the premise on which the detainment camps were built. The gift was, I suggest, an attempt to disarm the Captain with kindness by appealing to him as a family man, and is reminiscent of two of the fox stories by Aesop. In the first, *The fox and the crow*, the fox flatters the crow in order to get what he wants. In the second, *The fox and the lion*, the fox, after meeting the lion on a number of occasions, becomes used to the presence of the powerful lion and risks familiarity (Zipes 1996, pp. 212, 23). Both POW stories mythologise the brazenness of the Italian prisoner in his attempt to make good in a bad situation.

The banjo poem hinges on a musical metaphor. Music is the central metaphor for everything that is good, everything that is left behind or lost, everything that is not the war. Using music as the vehicle for his message, Tosto’s choice may have been for the same reasons given above. Reasons that have to do with the charming of the women in the Captain’s life, and the then fashionable ideas about what it was that women liked. There is, however, a sense in which music springs to mind as the most easily translatable human practice – that, in discussing his feelings about a position in a war that is unpredictable with a very young girl who does not speak the same language as he does, the most likely common ground would be something like music. This common notion of music as a unifying force between people of different backgrounds, with its roots in the Romantic movement drawing on Classical theory and philosophy of music, probably

informed Tosto's choice of metaphor on an unconscious level. This complex of Western beliefs about music has been valorised by successive generations and still has currency today (in, for example, the Eurovision Song Contest). The belief that music could act as a bridge between people of different backgrounds stemmed from the idea that music somehow transcended human language – that it had a spiritual dimension above and beyond its context of production. This spiritual dimension is the root of faith in music as a bridge to, and a means of bettering, the other. In fact this same notion was behind the productions of the operettas at Zonderwater – notions of the unifying and civilising effect of music.

Tosto “deceives” (*sic*) his imprisonment time by playing his banjo, according music the power to alter his sense of time passing. “Deceive” fits well into the self-styling of many of the prisoners, as outlined above, and while it is a free translation, it certainly captures the spirit of the Italian camps where the time in those long years of the war was not “killed” or “spent”, but “cheated” or “beguiled”. More than that, he suggests that his song represents all of his feelings of “homesickfullness” (*sic*) and are sent as gifts to those girls, whom, it would seem, he now views with older, wiser eyes. In his poem the pretty girls of his past, the memory of which are encoded in his song, are fading.

The narratives related above illustrate the use of stories about music to articulate an identity. Many of the positive attributes connected to their Italianness (as articulated in vernacular forms) are worked into narratives around an activity that is itself considered to be very Italian. In addition to the articulation or affirmation of Italianness, the stories serve to define a POW identity. Once again, the world of music provides an ideal background as it is void of any direct references to politics or the war. Stories about a song, or banjo, or the making of a violin are innocuous enough to pass beneath the radar of would-be censors. Not only did these works (the objects, as well as their stories) survive the war, they also became objects of a peculiar sort of veneration and pride after the war. Their place in archives and museums proves that their significance as second-order signs is recognised and valued.

REFERENCES

- Albertini, G. Author's interview, Johannesburg, 6 May 2004.
- Andrews, J. 1986. *The Oxford Italian dictionary*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Barthes, R. 1993. *Mythologies*. London: Vintage.
- Birnbaum, L.C. 1993. *Black madonnas: Feminism, religion, and politics in Italy*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.
- Campbell, J. 1968 *The hero with a thousand faces* (second edition). Princeton: Princeton University Press.

- Forgacs, D. & Lumley, R. (eds.) 1996. *Italian cultural studies: An introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Harris, V. 1993. *Italian regional cooking*. London: BBC Books.
- Il novellino: The hundred old tales*. London: George Routledge and Sons, n.d. [1926], 94, pp. 199-200.
- Paratus*, March 1983.
- Moni, S (dir.) 1989. *Captivi Italici in Sud Africa* (documentary film in four parts). Viva Films (South Africa) and VAV (Rome).
- Richards, C. 1995. *The new Italians*. London: Penguin Books.
- Sani, G. 1992. *History of the Italians in South Africa 1498–1989*. Johannesburg: Zonderwater Block, South Africa.
- Zipes, J. (Ed.) 1996. *Aesop's fables*. London: Penguin Books.

CONSTRUCTING THE RELEVANT LISTENER: POWER, KNOWLEDGE AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITY IN THE DISCOURSE OF MUSICAL AUTONOMY

Tobias Pontara, University of Stockholm, Sweden

INTRODUCTION

Concepts like “the music itself” and the “specifically musical” have, explicitly or implicitly, structured much of the writing and talking on Western classical music. In particular, these notions of musical autonomy have arguably been the main ingredients in some of the most influential discourses on Western instrumental art music during the past two hundred years. I will briefly sketch out the history of musical autonomy below; suffice it to say here that many scholars believe it came to an end during the 1990s. This may or may not be true with regard to the discipline of musicology, which some writers today prefer to characterise as an intertextual field rather than a unitary area of research, thereby indicating that we may indeed be “witnessing the disintegration of musicology as a discipline” (Scott 1998/2005, p. 131). Whatever diagnosis we will find appropriate to characterise the subject of musicology after two decades of intense self-interrogation (a self-interrogation, admittedly, that has not been carried out by all or even the majority of musicologists), there are arguably areas outside the academy where the axioms of musical autonomy are still prevalent. One of those areas, I suggest, is the way art music, and in particular *instrumental* art music, is described and evaluated in texts directed to the non-professional, lay listener.

In this essay I will examine one such text in order to demonstrate how a specific kind of listening subject is produced and constituted within what, following a Foucauldian tradition, will be understood as the discourse of musical autonomy. More specifically, I will focus on how the listener is positioned and defined within this discourse *and* how this positioning relates to, and can be seen as infused with, issues of power. Thus, I will argue that the discursive construction of the listening subject in what are purportedly descriptions of “the music itself” in effect has far-reaching material consequences. Not only do such descriptions play an important part in regulating what is to count as true statements about a certain kind of music, they also delineate the intelligible and

appropriate responses to this music. By providing us with authorised representations of pieces of music, descriptions of “the music itself” are liable to participate in the formation of a “purely musical” listener. Thus, they regulate and constrict the ways we are supposed to understand, define and experience ourselves and our relation to music in certain situations. In conjunction with this line of reasoning I will also argue that the operation of power must be seen as permeating the relationship, continuously re-established by texts such as the one below, between those who are officially authorised to speak about music and those who are not. This will eventually lead me to the conclusion that there is indeed something more going on in the discourse of musical specificity or autonomy than a purely aesthetic evaluation of the music itself, and that this “something more” should be acknowledged by the cultural institutions and associated authorities implicated in the perpetuation of this discourse.

The term discourse will here be understood in its Foucauldian sense as a group of rule-governed statements constituting a body of knowledge, held in place by a network of institutional, social and discursive practices. As will already have become clear, however, it is not my intention simply to carve out my conclusions on a purely theoretical and abstract level. Instead, I will anchor my discussion in a particular text taken from a record-sleeve accompanying a recently reissued recording of Brahms’s Third Symphony. My argument will then crucially rest on the premise that this text should be seen as representing the music as a self-sufficient and autonomous object, thereby instantiating and reproducing a discourse in which instrumental art music has traditionally been constructed as autonomous.¹ By taking this methodological route I hope to show in a concrete way how the listening subject is constructed in the discourse of musical autonomy. This listening subject will then be further expounded by contrasting it with a very different kind of musical experience.

THE CONCEPT OF SUBJECT POSITION

The term “subject position” has been variously defined as a “way of being and acting [produced by statements within a particular discourse] that human beings can take up” (Kendall & Wickham 2003, p. 27), as “little more than ‘ways of speaking’ within a particular discourse” (Howarth 2000, p. 80), and as “historically specific positions of agency and identity for individuals” of which discourses are the bearers (Nixon 1997, p. 319).

As these writers point out, the notion of a subject position is at bottom a Foucauldian concept. In *The Archaeology of Knowledge* Foucault tells us that one of his main tasks is

¹ In Pontara (2007) this assumption is justified in detail.

to identify within discourse itself a field of regularity for the production of the various positions of subjectivity available within that discourse (Foucault 1972/2005, p. 60). According to Foucault, discourse is productive in the sense that it *brings about* the things it speaks about, as well as the positions or places from which it is spoken or otherwise made intelligible. What this means is that both objects of knowledge and knowledgeable subjects are constituted *within* discourses. Perhaps the clearest expression of this constructionist notion is to be found in another place in the *Archaeology of Knowledge*, where Foucault stresses that discourses are “practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak” (Foucault 2002, p. 54). The term “object” should here be understood as referring both to the discursive constitution of subject positions, as well as material objects and events.²

Foucault’s notion of subject position has been taken up by, among others, Stuart Hall. Hall’s explication of this concept can be seen as a somewhat simplified and less structuralist version of Foucault’s dense line of reasoning. At the end of a lengthy discussion of the Foucauldian concept of discourse, Hall arrives at the question “Where, then, is ‘the subject’ in [the] discursive approach to meaning, representation and power?” He observes that there are at least two different senses in which Foucault’s subject seems to be produced through discourse. In the first sense “discourse itself produces ‘subjects’ – figures who personify the particular forms of knowledge which the discourse produces” (Hall 1997, p. 56). But, Hall says,

discourse also produces a place for the subject (i.e. the reader or viewer, who is also ‘subjected to’ discourse) from which its particular knowledge and meaning most makes sense. It is not inevitable that all individuals in a particular period will become the subjects of a particular discourse in this sense, and thus the bearers of its power/knowledge. But for them – us – to do so, they – we – must locate themselves/ourselves in the position from which the discourse makes most sense, and thus become its ‘subjects’ by ‘subjecting’ ourselves to its meaning, power and regulation. All discourses, then, construct subject-positions from which alone they make sense. (Hall 1997, p. 56)

It is in this sense that I will understand the term “subject position” here. Hence, the question stressed in this essay – “How is the listening subject constructed within the

² Foucault, like later discourse theorists, is clearly not of the opinion that material objects are altogether discursively constructed. Rather it is the material object as a *meaningful* object that cannot be separated from the discursive practices in which it appears. To take an example from Chantal Mouffe and Ernesto Laclau, a round leather object can only *be* a football within a specific discursive practice, and then only “to the extent that it establishes a system of relations with other objects” (quoted in Hall 1997, p. 70).

discourse of musical autonomy and how does this positioning of the listening subject relate to issues of power?" – does not imply that we are simply the helpless victims of discourse. It is always (more or less) possible for us to resist the power/knowledge of a particular discourse and thus the different subject positions it produces. This could be done, for example, by investing emotionally and intellectually in the subject positions of alternative discourses. But to the extent that we are subjected, or subject ourselves, to the power/knowledge of a particular discourse, we become the bearers of its subject positions. Furthermore, for Hall (and for Foucault) these subject positions are not simply an effect of discourse; rather, by being the places from which any particular discourse is made intelligible they should simultaneously count among its constitutive elements (see also Barker 2002, p. 39; Kendall & Wickham 2003, p. 54).

As Hall points out, the discourse theoretical concept of subject-position is intrinsically linked to the notion that knowledge is fundamentally a product of discourse, and not of the subjects positioned within it. "Subjects", he says, "may produce particular texts, but they are operating within the limits of the *episteme*, the *discursive formation*, the *regime of truth*, of a particular period and culture" (Hall 1997, p. 55; see also Mills 2003/2004, p. 70). Before proceeding to an analysis of the kind of subject position offered to the listener within the discourse of musical autonomy, we must make a brief pause, therefore, to see what the "*regime*" of musical autonomy amounts to historically.

MUSICAL AUTONOMY: A VERY SHORT HISTORY

As David Clarke points out, the dominant historical narrative of musical autonomy locates the birth of this ideal, if not the concept itself, at the turn of the 19th century (Clarke 2003, p. 161). As many writers have observed, at this historical juncture a new and very different way of understanding, evaluating and writing about music is beginning to emerge (Neubauer 1986; Dahlhaus 1989a; Goehr 1992; McClary 1993; Johnson 1995; Kramer 1995; Morrow 1997; Bonds 1997; Cook 1998; Chua 1999; Treitler 1999; Berger 2000; Paddison 2002; Tomlinson 2003). In writers such as Wilhelm Heinrich Wackenroder, Ludwig Tieck and E. T. A. Hoffmann we see the instigation of a discourse in which instrumental art music is gradually "spoken into existence" (Chua 1999, p. 6) as the paradigm case of what music essentially is, what it means (or does not mean), how it relates (or does not relate) to other fields of human and cultural concerns and activities, and how we should ideally position ourselves in relation to it. One important feature apparent in the writings of these early Romantics is the requirement, closely connected to the idealisation and glorification of instrumental music, that attention be paid to music for its own sake.

This claim that music must be valued for its own sake, and not for any extrinsic purpose it might serve, is one of the significant statements around which the discourse of musical autonomy, often explicitly but sometimes more implicitly, has repeatedly been built. Already in Hoffmann we find this claim inextricably bound up with the notion of musical structure as the prime target for musical criticism and reception (Dahlhaus 1989a, p. 7; see also Dahlhaus 1989b, p. 91). But whereas the Romantic conception of musical structure is closely tied to a contemporaneous idealist metaphysics of transcendence (Bonds 1997, pp. 405–413), leading these writers to affirm “the inseparability of a musical structure from the poetic and spiritual associations and imagery that this structure evoked” (Subotnik 1996, p. 151), by mid-century this transcendentalist aesthetic has become transformed and replaced by a decidedly more formalistic version of musical autonomy concerned explicitly and much more exclusively with “the purely technical parameters of musical structure” (Subotnik 1996, p. 151; see also Goehr 1992, p. 155). The paramount example of this process is, of course, the appearance of the first edition of Eduard Hanslick’s *On the Musically Beautiful* in 1854.

Elaborating on themes developed by, among others, Hans-Georg Nägeli, Johann Friedrich Herbart and Robert Zimmermann, Hanslick in this book effectuates a further purification of the purely musical – of “the music itself” – by which the metaphysical import so important to Romantic aesthetics becomes defined as belonging to the extra-musical (Goehr 1992, p. 155). Indeed, from now on the extra-musical can be seen as the significant Other of musical autonomy, leaving the possibility open to draw the line between music and its Other on a number of different levels. For it is certainly not only the affections and “the generalised feeling of longing” (Lippman 1992, p. 298) of Romantic theory and poetics that must be assigned to the extra-musical, so must all forms of specific meanings, whether they are understood in terms of representational or semantic content, or whatever. Hence, the statement that music has its own purely musical meaning. Finally, the *regime* of the specifically musical places the social and cultural circumstances surrounding the musical work in the realm of its extra-musical Other, thus cutting musical structure – as well as the production and reception of music – loose from its historical context. Consequently, Hanslick states that “the character of a musical work as such” has nothing to do with “the social and political conditions which dominate its time” (Hanslick 1986, p. 47).

Sara Mills argues that the statements constituting a discourse in the Foucauldian sense are of a specific kind, namely those institutionally authorised utterances that have a significant effect on the way a particular topic of analysis is constituted and on what counts as knowledge or as “in the true” in that particular area (Mills 1997/2004, p. 55). I

believe that the claims accounted for above should be seen as the central statements defining and delineating the discourse of musical autonomy. These statements, moreover, structure and organise a whole field of knowledge; a plethora of more specific statements concerned principally with the structural aspects of these elusive entities called musical works. Although such statements may not always be immediately recognisable (since they are often articulated in other terms and sometimes not at all), they function as the regulative principles for a dispersed field of talking and writing about instrumental art music, including the kind of didactic texts of which I will now give an example.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF LISTENER IDENTITY IN THE DISCOURSE OF “THE MUSIC ITSELF”: REPRESENTING BRAHMS’S THIRD SYMPHONY

The text I will concentrate on here should – apart from exemplifying the discursive construction of musical autonomy – be seen as belonging to a genre of texts, the main function of which is to inform the assumed lay (i.e. non-professional) listener in an accessible way about the character and workings of symphonies and other pieces of classical instrumental music. Clearly, the specific purpose of such an activity is to provide the required amount of information considered necessary for a satisfying and accurate appreciation of this kind of music, whether it be listened to at home or in the concert hall. Not surprisingly, therefore, these texts are written by authorised experts. These experts, employed and acknowledged as they are by the large recording companies, are either renowned music critics or professional musicologists (or sometimes both). As with other similar “music appreciation texts” it is a question about the circulation and spreading of highly institutionalised discursive practices and the knowledge about music produced within those practices. To be more precise, the information offered in this type of text can more often than not be seen as lighter versions of more elaborate and sophisticated arguments circulating within the academy. Thus, via the mechanisms of mass production, such texts are clearly involved in the formation of a professionalised attitude to musical appreciation in the non-trained listener.

The text presently under consideration, then, is a description of Johannes Brahms’s Third Symphony. It is included on the record-sleeve of a recording of that symphony issued by Deutsche Grammophon (DGG 445507-2), with the Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra playing. Apart from a final section dealing with the Variations on a Theme of Haydn I reproduce it in its entirety here:

Brahms's Third Symphony is the briefest of the four; yet it is also perhaps the most ambitious, striving for a structural coherence which transcends individual movements. In order that the listener should be able to comprehend the large-scale processes, each of the movements is less brilliant, less strongly profiled than its counterpart in the other symphonies.

Commentators have long recognised the most obvious cyclic feature of the work: the opening theme of the first movement is recalled in the closing bars of the finale; this is only one of several devices that span the entire work. Another important thematic reference links the second and fourth movements. The mysterious second theme of the Andante fails to reappear at its expected place in the recapitulation, where it is supplanted by a new lyrical melody. It is "recapitulated" only in the finale: there, transformed into a solemn chorale, it interrupts the first group and then the development.

The tonal design of the symphony adds another element of continuity. Unlike those of the other three, all its movements stay close to the principal key, F major. The outer ones are in F, the inner ones in the key of the dominant, C major and minor respectively. No composer before Brahms had created a symphony with this harmonic plan: he was clearly attempting something special.

What that was, in fact, can be understood as a sonata form writ large, with the two central movements corresponding to the second group in its traditional key. This design allowed Brahms to present and explore a special tonal conflict between the keys of F major and F minor, and between A natural and A flat, the two notes which define those keys. The conflict is embodied in the terse motive, F–A flat–F, which begins and then dominates the first movement.

This tonal struggle reaches a climax in the finale, which begins with an agitated theme in F minor. Minor and major clash at the end of the development section, where the latter seems about to claim victory; but the recapitulation gets underway in F minor. Only in the coda, with the reappearance of the symphony's opening theme, is the matter at last settled. The transformed theme does not (as some have asserted) return us to where we began, but rather shows how far we have come. It now symbolises the resolution of the tonal conflict it had initiated. The originally dissonant, chromatic inflections and the once turbulent rhythms are now dissolved into pure F major and into shimmering, arrhythmic tremolos in the strings.³

In this rather extensive description there is only one explicit reference to the listener. It appears in the first section where it is stated that the main objective for the listener is to grasp the "large-scale processes" of the music. Thus, right from the beginning the listener is placed in a specific relation to this music as the rapt observer of the unfolding

³ The text is written by Walter Frisch and is in fact a condensed version of some pages in his book *Brahms: The Four Symphonies* (See Frisch 2003, pp. 91–92).

of musical structure. This position is implicitly spelled out in the section that follows where the symphony's "cyclic feature" is emphasised. This focus on the music's cyclic form is exemplified with what is presented as two of the "important thematic references" of the work, but we are also told that these thematic references are only a small part of all the "devices that span the entire work". In this way an attentive listening directed at the music's *thematic structure* is strongly encouraged, though most of the thematic relationships will probably remain impenetrable as far as the non-professional listener is concerned. In the third section the focus shifts away from a concern with thematic structure to descriptions of the symphony in terms of its *harmonic structure*. Again we are confronted with what I have termed above the rapt observer position, only this time it is constructed from a slightly different angle. Thus, talk about the symphony's "tonal design" suggests that the listener's attention should above all be directed towards matters concerning structural relationships in the music. And so does the claim derived from the observation of the symphony's innovative "harmonic plan", i.e. that the Third Symphony "can be understood as a sonata form writ large" with the inner movements "corresponding to the second group in its traditional key". Finally, in the last two sections, musical structure is once more brought to the fore when it is stated that the "tonal conflict" embedded in the symphony's opening motto permeates and "dominates" the whole of the first movement and, moreover, that it reaches its climax and solution only at the very end of the last movement. It is these configurations or large-scale processes – the network of thematic references, the overarching sonata form, and the pitch conflict embroiled in the opening motto – that are represented as the chief mechanisms behind the structural coherence occupying such a prominent position in the above description. In this way the grasping of large-scale processes and a tightly integrated musical structure becomes the all-important objective for the relevant or musically literate listener. That is, in order to comprehend the music at all we must enter into the position from which these large-scale structural processes become visible and intelligible, and this position is at the same time the position from which the *language used to describe these processes* becomes comprehensible and authoritative.

Beyond the structure-oriented annotations identified here, the whole text must be seen as constituted by a machinery of more or less technical terms by means of which the necessity and superiority of a structural listening position are achieved. The discursive construction of this subject position is thus inseparable from the technical language used to describe the music. But above all, it is established from the relation that links the truth and authority attached to the central statements concerning the symphony's structural coherence (including statements about the large-scale processes that underpin this coherence) with the position of the persons uttering these statement. That

is to say, from a discourse theoretical perspective, the actual truth-value of these statements (the extent to which they really are true or false) must be seen as less important than the fact that they are uttered from a privileged and authorised position within discourse – deriving, that is, their *effect of truth* (Foucault 1984, p. 60) from “the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true” (Foucault 1984, p. 73). In other words, the “regime of knowledge” (Foucault 2000, p. 331) that sustains the truth of these statements and the subject position they construct for the listener cannot be separated from the institutionally established discursive practices in which the production and spreading of knowledge are delegated to those who occupy the subject positions of experts (i.e. music critics and professional musicologists).

What we are dealing with here, then, is not simply a neutral and “innocent” description of a piece of music and its inner workings, but also a piece of cultural work being done. This is so because the way that the text constructs a specific listening position for us cannot be separated from the type of structural knowledge produced within the discursive construction of musical autonomy to which the text clearly belongs. This subject position, the “structure-oriented” listener inscribed in the text, is tantamount to the listener, who “concentrates attention primarily on the formal relationships established over the course of a single composition” (Subotnik 1988, p. 88); it is the rapt observer position effectuated by and at the same time constitutive of the type of structural knowledge necessary to appreciate “the music itself”. To grasp the music on the premises of musical autonomy therefore implies subjecting oneself to this subject position, whilst at the same time ruling out other possible ways of responding to or positioning oneself in relation to the music. A certain kind of subjectivity, a certain way of experiencing both the music and ourselves is thus offered, required and naturalised. This moulding and shaping of a specific listening position and its adjacent kind of subjectivity cannot be separated from the operations and workings of power within the discourse of musical autonomy.

THE LISTENING SUBJECT AND POWER

One important thread in the Foucauldian conception of power is that power cannot plausibly be viewed as a simple repressive mechanism possessed by and serving the interests of a dominating or ruling group. Much of the discussion and critique of musical autonomy has been premised on such a negative conception of power, and the simplifications stemming from it have rightly been criticised by Scott Burnham as portraying “the very idea of [music’s] autonomy as the mere dupe of ideology” (Burnham 1999, p. 213). For Foucault, power is both a productive, as well as a constraining force (Phillips & Jørgensen 2004, p. 14); that is, it “does not only weigh on us as a force that

says no” but it “traverses and produces things, it induces pleasure, forms knowledge, produces discourse” (Foucault 1984, p. 61). The construction in the sleeve notes of a professionalised and musically literate subject caught up in a rapt contemplation of structural relationships is thus a clear example of how the operations of power and knowledge work in conjunction to form a listening position congenial to the appreciation of autonomous musical structures. At the same time power must be seen as a constraining force, since it circumscribes the possible ways of talking, being, experiencing and acting in a certain situation by fixing the ways subjects are positioned and defined within discourses. That power is not *just* positive – or more precisely, that power is *both* positive *and* negative, *both* productive *and* constraining – is clear from Foucault’s assertion that “the exercise of power is a ‘conduct of conducts’ and a management of possibilities” (Foucault 2000, p. 341). By being productive, then, power is at the same time restrictive: it opens up certain discourses, certain perspectives, certain kinds of being and acting, certain kinds of knowledge, certain kinds of experiences; and consequently closes down others (See also Hacking 2002, p. 113).

The manner in which the music is represented in the sleeve notes seems to rule out several possible ways of relating and responding to it. The sober and impersonal tone of the text is established by means of an objectified and theoretically informed language that leaves no room for any account of the subjective or emotional responses the author may have experienced. Below we will elaborate on a type of personal response resulting in a very different subject position from the one marked out for the listener in the text. In order to see clearly how the deletion of this alternative listening identity relates to questions of power in the discursive construction of music’s autonomy, however, we must first glance at the way that power relations between writer and reader, or between sender and receiver, are established in this process.

From what has been said so far, it is clear that the theoretically informed language in the sleeve notes constructs Brahms’s Third Symphony as a “disciplinary object”⁴ accessible only from the perspective of what Nicholas Cook has called “musicological listening” (Cook 1990) and what I described above, with reference to Rose Subotnik, as the structure-oriented listener inscribed in the text. This way of distilling a specifically musical entity is in effect an operation of power, since it actually makes music the possession of those in control of structural or musicological knowledge rather than the listener/reader purportedly addressed. Suzanne Cusick has demonstrated how this way of constructing a disciplinary object is closely linked to “power relations within the aesthetic experience of ‘the music itself’ as they have been reified in countless

⁴ For the notion of a “disciplinary object”, see Kevin Korsyn’s *Decentering Music*, pp. 110–123.

musicological and aesthetic writings since Hanslick” (Cusick 1999, p. 494). Cusick is inter alia concerned with the way we as non-professional listeners are encouraged to neutralise ourselves through the very act of adjusting our experience of music to the interpretations provided by authorised specialists speaking on behalf of “the music itself” – a phenomenon she elsewhere refers to as “[t]he spectacle of the disappearing Self” (Cusick 1994, p. 84). Thus, she writes:

As the cult of absolute music encourages us to have it, the aesthetic experience is one in which we leave behind our concerns and anxieties in the real world and escape into the arcane one described by Hanslick as ‘the free play of pure form’. There we can imagine ourselves to be angels, even gods: for ‘the music itself’ is a kind of ether in which we lose our selves. As we do so, we imaginatively lose our genders, our sexualities, our very bodies (Cusick 1999, p. 494).

According to Cusick, when we subjugate ourselves to the pure aesthetic experience required by “the music itself”, we simultaneously enter into a relation of power. This is a relation set up between the “loss of the listening self in the aesthetic experience of music”, on the one hand, and “the power claimed by those who would interpret ‘the music itself’ in language – musicologists and their institutional kin” (Cusick 1999, p. 494), on the other: “For they do not lose themselves; they interpret for us the nature of the thing in which we lose ourselves ...” (Cusick 1999, p. 494).

While I regard the general tenets of Cusick’s argument as very plausible and important, I find her description of how power is generated and distributed to be essentially misguided. It seems to me that she is heading towards the highly questionable conclusion that musicologists and “their kin” in a more or less calculating way use the language of “the music itself” in order to gain control over the music and the lay listener. Her somewhat psychoanalytically styled explanation, according to which professional musicologists and other authorities are above all driven by a desire to transcend “the culturally feminine” (Cusick 1999, p. 481) and gain control over music’s emotional and sensual powers – thus re-enacting “through [their] mastery of the ‘science’ of music ... an identification with being a ‘top’” (Cusick 1999, pp. 494–95), while reserving for the musically illiterate the position of being a “bottom” – comes close to the “dupe of ideology” theories criticised by Burnham.⁵ Instead of accepting this centralised view of

⁵ Cusick is writing from a feminist perspective, which leads her to equate the “loss of self” or the feeling of being a “bottom” with “an experience of being feminized” (Cusick 1999, p. 494). Now, I do think that there is some truth to this line of reasoning, but what I dispute is the notion that some people more or less deliberately *use* the language of structural knowledge in

power, according to which power is the possession of a privileged few, we should see the power relation between musical “tops” and “bottoms” as inscribed in the discursive construction of musical autonomy itself. True, some people do have a privileged position with respect to structural knowledge, but that doesn’t mean they *possess* this knowledge in such a way that they can *use* it to dominate others at will (see also Lukes 2005, p. 89).

It should be obvious that these qualms are not tantamount to a wholesale rejection of Cusick’s argument. Like Cusick I believe that the power relations emerging within the discourse of musical autonomy amount in several ways to a loss of “self” for the untutored listener. And in line with her argument I also believe that those who are able and permitted to take up the subject position of the expert will find themselves in a position of domination in relation to the musical amateur, not least because they are approved and sanctioned to engage in an authorised way of speaking about music from which divisions between those pleasures that are musically relevant and those that are not can effectively be made. Hanslick, for one, makes the distinction between inherently musical and indisputably non-musical pleasures very clear when he contrasts “the mental satisfaction which the listener finds in continuously following and anticipating the composer’s design” (Hanslick 1986, p. 64) with “the raw emotion of savages and the gushing of the music enthusiasts” which, he states, “can be lumped together in a single category contrary to it” (Hanslick 1986, p. 63). Hanslick is here stigmatising all responses that are not derived from a structure-oriented approach to music. Exactly the same thing, though in more subtle way, is happening in the sleeve notes. Thus, the omnipresence of the structure-oriented listener in the sleeve text works to naturalise this subject position, whilst at the same time it delegitimises a host of other listening positions, attitudes and types of interactions that could be taken toward this music. And, I would say, it succeeds to the point that it makes these alternative responses appear virtually unintelligible – or at least very inappropriate.

As an example of an alternative response we could imagine a kind of idiosyncratic listening experience that would merge the Third Symphony into the personal life-world of a particular listener, reactivating at every new hearing a range of specific feelings, associations and meanings connected with that life-world. Most likely, this music would then play some (more or less important) part in the self-narrative constituting the personal history of the listener. Moreover, the music would itself be invested with the particular meanings pertaining to this personal history and so be represented and construed as a very different object from the disciplinary object of structural knowledge.

order to repress and dominate others and lock them into a subordinate (that is, feminised) position.

This does not – as someone who got his Wittgenstein mixed up would no doubt be quick to point out – land us in a situation where music gets invested with obscure “meanings” derived from some kind of emotionally private language. For the web of “private” meanings I find in the Third Symphony, inextricably linked as they are to my personal history, are perfectly communicable: regardless of whether you like them or not (you may have your own preferred set) I can tell you about them in a way that makes perfect sense to you.

The framing of the structure-oriented listener in the sleeve text rules out responses and uses of the music such as the one described above. This structure-oriented listener can in fact be seen as a special instance of what Pierre Bourdieu has termed the “*pure gaze*”, which he traces back to Kant’s *Critique of Judgement*. Referring to Ortega y Gasset, Bourdieu describes this ideal as amounting to “a systematic refusal of all that is ‘human’ ... namely, the passions, emotions and feelings which ‘ordinary’ people invest in their ‘ordinary’ lives” (Bourdieu 1979/2003, p. 4). Structure-oriented listening thus offers us a subject position in which we literally run the risk of losing ourselves: through the universalistic aspirations of the aesthetic of “the music itself” the realm of autonomous music, as well as the listening experience it is supposed to engender, is severed and cautiously kept apart from the concreteness of our personal histories and life-worlds. This eradication of “idiosyncratic subjectivity” can be seen as a consequence of the more general way in which the constellation of subject positions and the power/knowledge of musical autonomy disempower the untutored listener and exercise control over his subjective, emotional and sensate responses (see also Eagleton 1990, p. 15). For the text, and the discourse of musical autonomy that it represents and reproduces, leave no room whatsoever for the listener to actively construct his own interpretations around this music. Instead he is implicitly but strongly advised to submit to interpretations by persons occupying *other* subject positions. That is to say, he is invited to accept the interpretations of those with the capacity and competence to speak and understand the language of structural knowledge, those authorised to speak the truth about this music. Thus, by taking up the subject positions of musical autonomy, we run the risk of depriving ourselves of our own power to interpretation, sacrificing our “idiosyncratic subjectivity” for the sake of the purely musical responses advocated by the aesthetic discourse of “the music itself”. We become subjected to a discourse in which the knowledge of those occupying the subject positions of experts is legitimated as the only authorised and relevant kind of knowledge, and thus silenced we lose our privilege to conceptualise the music and make it our own (see also Cusick 1999, pp. 479–80).

This situation seems to place the untutored listener in a kind of musical limbo: with his/her own responses delegitimised and at the same time without the necessary

analytical competence required to enter into the subject position of the structure-oriented listener, he/she is actually left without a musical identity altogether. This situation could be characterised, borrowing a phrase from Lydia Goehr, as “a clear case of conceptual imperialism” (Goehr 1992, p. 245; see also Goehr 2001, pp. 177–192): music is conceptualised, interpreted and colonised by those in the position to “speak the truth”. And even if they cannot in fact be viewed as the originators of this “truth” or, for that matter, the owners of the discourse and the power/knowledge that sustains it, they surely do occupy a privileged position in relation to it. In this sense, it’s really their music – not that of the majority of “music enthusiasts” with their inflated and “gushing” responses.

To conclude this section, I would like to draw attention to yet another way, also indicated by Cusick, in which power is at work within the discourse of musical autonomy. The description of Brahms’s Third Symphony is, I would suggest, implicated in an unspoken and admittedly very oblique disciplining of the body. For, as it seems, the way the listening position is constructed in the text has the consequence of making the body of the listener virtually irrelevant. In order to comprehend “the structural coherence” and “the large-scale processes” of the work, it is clear that the listener must be able to exercise the “pure gaze” characteristic of the disinterested and detached “spectator”. As a rapt observer of thematic and harmonic progressions and other structural relationships, he/she must take up a position in which he/she is, so to speak, firmly fixed in front of the music. That is, he/she must be prepared to “be silent”, must “sit still [and] become ‘all ears’”, so that he/she can “focus all bodily awareness on [the] experience of sound, and ... let [his/her] consciousness be entirely filled with ‘the music itself’” (Cusick: 1994, p. 84; see also Cusick 1999, p. 495). We are thus, however implicitly, advised not to sing, to move, to dance, to walk around, to gesticulate with our arms, or otherwise indulge in whatever bodily activities can obstruct our – or, even worse, others’ – concentration on the formal relationships of “the music itself”.

The subject position offered here is thus in several respects a subject position where the listener has to leave his/her body behind. Ironically, this might actually suggest that it is somewhat incorrect to say that the body is disciplined, since a more accurate account of what happens would be that it is altogether disappearing. But such a conclusion fails to take account of the far-reaching consequences implied in the autonomist neutralising of the body. For this neutralising certainly affects the way we come to experience and relate to our *actual* bodies; it circumscribes what we are allowed and what we allow ourselves to do and feel in certain situations (see also Small 1990). There is a well-hidden disciplinary power speaking through the kind of texts of which I have given an example in this essay; texts that uphold and prolong the discourse of musical autonomy. Very

delicately such texts induce in us a kind of internalised surveillance, which works to strengthen the way the body can be felt as an obstacle, an embarrassment or a disturbing factor in certain situations and places. One such place, of course, is the concert hall, where one easily gets the impression that the techniques of disciplinary power and the “docile bodies” they produce are every bit as active as ever they were in the church or the classroom.

CONCLUSION

Using a short text from a record sleeve as my example, I have tried to show how, in the discourse of musical autonomy, descriptions of “the music itself” are involved in the production of subject positions and, in particular, how the framing of a structure-oriented listener is related to operations of power in this discourse. My purpose in this essay has *not* been to reveal some meticulously concealed ideology – a “false consciousness” – working through the language of musical autonomy. I do not believe that the statements, categories and ideals of musical autonomy are basically or even predominantly developed to serve and secure the interests of a certain group of people, interests somewhat mysteriously obtainable only through the successful repression and concealment of our “true” or “fundamental” responses to music. Neither do I claim that the more personal, emotional and subjective responses described above will yield, were they to occur, some kind of indisputably authentic experiences untouched by the grid of discourses. By being alternative subject positions constructed within different types of discourses, these experiences too must be seen as discursively constructed. Moreover, the structural knowledge produced within the discourse of musical autonomy should not one-sidedly be seen as emptying musical experience of all spontaneity and vitality. The power/knowledge flowing from and permeating the discourse of musical autonomy creates meaning and coherence, induces pleasure and satisfaction, and makes possible that treasured “aesthetic experience ... in which we leave behind our concerns and anxieties in the real world” (Cusick 1999, p. 493). This, however, should not blind us to the fact that there are also other, less “pure”, things going on when music is treated as a phenomenon worthwhile contemplating for its own sake. The claim here, then, is not that it is inherently wrong for us to enjoy “the music itself”, but rather that the upholders and purveyors of musical autonomy cannot continue to neglect the “*non-musical*” consequences implied in the discursive practices that produce, reproduce and circulate it.

REFERENCES

- Barker, C. 2002. *Making sense of cultural studies*. London: SAGE.
- Berger, K. 2000. *A theory of art*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bonds, M. E. 1997. Idealism and the aesthetics of instrumental music at the turn of the nineteenth century, *Journal of the American Musicological Society*, 50, pp. 387-421.
- Bourdieu, P. 2003. *Distinction*. London: Routledge.
- Burnham, S. 1999. How music matters: Poetic content revisited. In Cook, N. & Everist, M. (eds.), *Rethinking music*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Chua, D. 1999. *Absolute music and the construction of meaning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Clarke, D. 2003. Musical autonomy revisited. In Clayton, M., Herbert, T., & Middleton, R. (eds.), *The cultural study of music*. London: Routledge.
- Cook, N. 1990. *Music, imagination, and culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cook, N. 1998. *Music: A very short introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cusick, S. 1994. Gender and the cultural work of a classical music performance, *Repercussions*, 3(1), pp. 77-110.
- Cusick, S. 1999. Gender, musicology, and feminism. In Cook, N. & Everist, M. (eds.), *Rethinking music*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dahlhaus, C. 1989a. *The idea of absolute music*. Lustig, R. (trans.) Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Dahlhaus, C. 1989b. *Nineteenth-century music*. Bradford Robinson, J (trans.) Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Eagleton, T. 1990. *The ideology of the aesthetic*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.
- Frisch, W. 2003. *Brahms: The four symphonies*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Foucault, M. 1980. Two lectures. In Gordon, C. (ed.), *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972-1977*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Foucault, M. 1984. Truth and power. In Rabinow, P. (ed.), *The Foucault reader*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Foucault, M. 2000. The subject and power. In Faubion, J. D. (ed.), *Michel Foucault: Power*. New York: The New Press.
- Foucault, M. 2002. *The archaeology of knowledge*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Goehr, L. 1992. *The imaginary museum of musical works*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Goehr, L. 2001. 'Music has no meaning to speak of': On the politics of musical interpretation. In Krausz, M. (ed.), *The interpretation of music*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Hacking, I. 2002. *Historical ontology*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Hall, S. 1997. The work of representation. In Hall, S. (ed.), *Representation: Cultural representation and signifying practices*. London: SAGE.
- Hanslick, E. 1986. *On the musically beautiful*. Payzant, G. (trans.). Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company.
- Howarth, D. 2000. *Discourse*. Ballmoor Buckingham: Open University Press.

- Johnson, J. H. 1995. *Listening in Paris: A cultural history*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Kendall, G. & Wickham, G. 1999/2003. *Using Foucault's methods*. London: SAGE.
- Korsyn, K. 2003. *Decentering music: A critique of contemporary musical research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kramer, L. 1995. *Classical music and postmodern knowledge*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Lippman, E. 1992/1994. *A history of Western musical aesthetics*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Lukes, S. 2005. *Power: A radical view*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
- McClary, S. 1993. Narrative agendas in "absolute" music: Identity and difference in Brahms's third symphony. In Solie, R. (ed.), *Musicology and difference: Gender and sexuality in music scholarship*. Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Mills, S. 2003/2004. *Michel Foucault*. London: Routledge.
- Mills, S. 1997/2004. *Discourse*. London: Routledge.
- Morrow, M. S. 1997. *German music criticism in the late eighteenth century. Aesthetic issues in instrumental music*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Neubauer, J. 1986. *The emancipation of music from language*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Nixon, S. 1997. Exhibiting masculinity. In Hall, S. (ed.), *Representation: Cultural representation and signifying practices*. London: SAGE.
- Paddison, M. 2002. Music as ideal: the aesthetics of autonomy. In Samson, J. (ed.), *Nineteenth-century music*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Phillips, L. & Jørgensen, M. 2004. *Discourse analysis as theory and method*. London: SAGE.
- Pontara, T. 2007. *Brev från den autonoma musikens värld. Den diskursiva konstruktionen av musikalisk autonomi i den samtida klassiska CD-skivan*. Doctoral dissertation: University of Stockholm.
- Scott, D. B. 2005. Postmodernism and music. In Sim, S. (ed.), *The Routledge Companion to Postmodernism*. Abingdon: Routledge.
- Small, C. 1998. *Musicking*. London: University Press of New England.
- Subotnik, R. 1988. Toward a deconstruction of structural listening: A critique of Schoenberg, Adorno, and Stravinsky. In Narmour, E. and Solie, R. (eds.), *Explorations in music, the arts, and ideas: Essays in honour of Leonard B. Meyer*. New York: Pendragon Press.
- Subotnik, R. 1996. *Deconstructive Variations*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Tomlinson, G. 2003. Musicology, Anthropology, History. In Clayton, M., Herbert, T. & Middleton, R. (eds.), *The cultural study of music*. London: Routledge.
- Treitler, L. 1999. The historiography of music: Issues of past and present. In Cook, N. & Everist, M. (eds.), *Rethinking music*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

THE ROLE OF MUSIC IN PRESERVING THE CULTURAL IDENTITY OF A MIGRANT COMMUNITY: A CASE STUDY OF DUAKOR FISHERMEN

*Eric Akrofi, Walter Sisulu University, South Africa
Nicholas Kofie, University of Cape Coast, Ghana*

ABSTRACT

The coastal areas of Ghana are inhabited by canoe fishermen, some of whom migrate to practise their trade in other coastal locations in the country, as well as neighbouring countries like Togo, Benin and La Cote d'Ivoire. Duakor, a settlement very close to the University of Cape Coast, has since the 1950s been inhabited by Ewe-speaking migrant fishermen from Anloga/Keta, a coastal town 300 kilometres east of Cape Coast. This study examines the extent to which Duakor fishermen's songs preserve their cultural identity especially in regard to language and music. Analyses of recorded live performances of the fishermen's songs reveal that some contain lyrics alluding to the social history of the Ewe; some are based on proverbs and lessons about life, as well as political events in Ghana. The accompanying musical instruments, melodic, rhythmic and harmonic styles of the songs are also typically Ewe.

INTRODUCTION

Ghana, a country with a population of about 20 million, has no less than 53 ethnic groups. The numerous languages of these ethnic groups have been placed under five major language groups, namely Akan, Dagbani, Ewe, Ga and Nzema, by the government of Ghana, which regards them as semi-official local languages, since English is the official language of the country.

The Ewe belong to one of the five predominant ethnic groups in Ghana; they live in the Volta Region and trace their ancestry to Notsie in the Republic of Togo. The present-day Volta Region was previously part of a German colony, which became a French/British Trust Territory after the Second World War and finally became part of Ghana after opting in a 1956 plebiscite to be part of the then Gold Coast (the former name of the country before independence in 1957).

Traditionally, the Anlo Ewe who live in the southern part of the Volta Region, along the coast, are predominantly fishermen and farmers. The fishermen migrate to other coastal areas of the country and other neighbouring countries like Togo, La Cote d'Ivoire, Benin and Liberia. These migrant fishermen cherish their traditions and maintain their identity wherever they settle. One of the means they use to maintain their identity is their music. This study, therefore, examines the extent to which the Duakor fishermen in Cape Coast in the Central Region of Ghana, who migrated from Anloga/Keta in the Volta Region of the country to their current location half a century ago, use music to preserve their cultural identity.

What brought these fishermen all the way from Anloga/Keta some 300 kilometres away to Duakor? It is a common human (anthropological) phenomenon that when people exhaust the physical resources in their places of origin, they move on to other locations. Other reasons for moving away from one's home area may be religious, economic or personal. Duakor fishermen are therefore no exception to this rule.

LOCATION

Duakor is situated off the West Gate of the University of Cape Coast, just a few metres away from the sea. The area occupied by its migrant fishermen is property owned by the university. Thus these residents are regarded as squatters and the awareness of this negative status is a matter of concern for the residents. They therefore pleaded with the researchers to support their cause in whatever way they could. This sense of insecurity may be a psychological reason for holding on strongly to their music and other traditions.

The settlement has a population of about 500 inhabitants made up of some 50 households. The men are predominantly fishermen, although a few of them work at the university as drivers, security men and cleaners, and only engage in fishing in their spare time. The women process the fish caught by their husbands (mainly by smoking and sometimes frying them) and sell it to local traders, who transport it to local markets, as well as other parts of the country for sale to consumers. Alongside fish processing, the women also process a root crop, cassava, into a staple food, *gari* which is consumed by many Ghanaians.

At this juncture it is worth explaining the role women play in the socio-economic life of the fishermen. The role played by the women in the processing and marketing of the fish caught by the fishermen shows the extent to which they, like most West African women, have a command over the market trading of agricultural and fishing products (Overa 1998).

Although the younger generation of Duakor residents, most of whom were born in Cape Coast, speak the local Fante (Akan) language fluently, most Duakor residents speak Ewe to any visitor who approaches the settlement. It is only when a visitor fails to respond to their greetings in Ewe that they switch to the Fante language. The Ewe language is thus one means of establishing the identity of the inhabitants of the settlement.

Music is the other means of establishing the identity of Duakor residents. Ewe (Anlo) music has such vitality that most Ghanaians can identify it from a distance. Performers of such music use specific musical instruments peculiar to the ethnic group: drums called *kidi*, *kagan*, *atsimevu*, *totodzi*, *kroboto*, double bells (*gankogui*), and gourd rattles (*axatse*). The musical instruments are accompanied by singing and handclapping. The tonal organisation of the music is based on parallel octaves played in unison and occasional, (i.e. cadential) parallel fourths and fifths in the voice parts. Basically the music is dominated by pentatonic and modal scales. This description pertains only to the Ewes of the south, who are distinct from the northern Ewes. Duakor fishermen are southern Ewes. The following transcription of one of the fishermen's songs is an example of the tonal organisation of Anlo music:



Meyi Kedzi Mava

Note the modal and pentatonic nature of this example and its cantor-chorus organisation; note also the parallel fourths of the two-part chorus.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

It may seem unusual for a small country like Ghana to have as many as 53 ethnic groups. The question then is, how do these different ethnic groups establish and maintain their identities; or better put, how do these groups negotiate their various identities?

There are different categories of identity with different contrasts such as local, traditional, hybrid, transcultural and global.¹ How does a person who lives in an urban setting in a modern nation maintain his/her traditions as a member of a larger (national) unit? How does he/she relate to other groups and/or individuals in the larger unit? In modern terms identity may be considered as a mosaic, since it may have different components fused together either consciously or unconsciously. This fusion can lead to a fixed identity; but other identities may be appropriated or negotiated, as the case may be. It is against this background of many possible identities that this study of how music may serve as an identity index was carried out. As such the research questions are as follows:

What are the characteristics of Duakor fishermen's songs? How different or similar are they to the songs of the fishermen of Anloga/Keta from where they migrated? To what extent have these songs been used in preserving the cultural identity of Duakor fishermen?

Certainly, fishermen are collective individuals, but it is not their individual identities that this study is directed at. Duakor fishermen are Ewe fishermen living in a new location away from home. There are other migrant Ewes in the Cape Coast environment. Is there any indication that the fishermen relate to other Ewe speakers in Cape Coast? Since this study is an ethnographic study focused on music, would the fishermen's songs be understood by non-fishermen whose music, nevertheless, has common features with the fishermen's music? If the songs are not understood by other Ewe speakers, would that be a deliberate attempt by the fishermen to keep the meaning of their songs from others?

In addition to the above questions, we could also ask how the fishermen interact with their local Cape Coast counterparts socially and musically.

SUBJECT MATTER OF THE SONGS

The texts of Ewe songs are in Ewe and thus are hardly understood by those who do not speak the language. Some of the song texts allude to political and historical events not only of the Ewe but the country, Ghana, as well. For example, the songs that accompany the casting and dragging of fishing nets of the Duakor fishermen are not about the sea or fishing, but about life, human relations, economic and political events or situations. Moral lessons drawn from political and social events in Ghana are also highlighted in some of the songs. Furthermore, some of the songs have "coded" texts which ordinary speakers of the Ewe language may not be able to decode or understand by merely

¹ See Ruud (2006).

listening to the music or paying attention to the lyrics. A literal translation into English does not help matters either.

For example, one of the songs whose lyrics is a fable goes as follows: a fast-running animal meets the chameleon and admonishes it that there is a leopard in the thicket. The chameleon retorts by saying it knows how to react when the need arises. This is a reference to the chameleon's ability to camouflage (change colour) in spite of its slowness. The song is a warning to the singer Adza (chameleon) by concerned members of the community about the consequences of his social criticisms, especially from the powers that be (leopard). But Adza is adamant and assures such concerned persons that he is circumspect in how he goes about his social criticisms and therefore they should not worry.

The lyrics of yet another song, which are not easy to understand ordinarily, are a response to insinuations by rival minstrels, since Adza seems to have stepped on many toes. Adza therefore tells his detractors that, if they are bold, they should come out openly instead of making insinuations. "Valour is displayed on the battlefield and not at home. Men like Lumumba² and Kotoka³ died defending a just cause; and that is what I, Adza, am doing without fear."

The lyrics of the last song recorded are a socio-political commentary on political intrigues which presumably affected some individual Ewes during the period immediately after independence. Thus, the name *Nkrumah* features in the said song, being a reference to the first Prime Minister/President of Ghana.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

There are three volumes by three different editors – Agbodeka (1997), Gavua (2000) and Lawrance (2005) – on the Ewe, with contributions from different scholars on the various aspects of Ewe culture ranging from linguistics, social organisation to economic activities. All the three volumes have chapters dealing with the music of the Ewe. However, it is the contribution by Fiagbedzi (1997) which mentions music performed by fishermen and lists them as *futahawo/todziha*, *vukuhawo* (rowing songs) and *kahehawo* (net-dragging songs). Even so, the said contribution by Fiagbedzi does not go beyond listing the different names of songs associated with fishing.

² Patrice Lumumba was the Prime Minister of the Congo; he was murdered because of his political ideals.

³ Kotoka overthrew Nkrumah in a coup and was killed in a counter-coup attempt.

Fiagbedzi (2005) further observes in his most recent publication that the culture of a people has three major dimensions: a) the aesthetic dimension, which deals with language, literature, art, poetry, dance, music, festivals, cuisine, etc., and gives colour, enrichment and enjoyment to a people; b) the moral dimension, which is concerned with values, laws and ethical frameworks that underlie a culture; and c) the explanatory dimension, which focuses on the culture's world views on the physical and phenomenal. Apart from the mentioned sources relevant to this study, similar studies by other researchers have theoretical implications for this study. Slobin (1970) notes that immigrants from the Soviet Union who went to Afghanistan in 1932 had their own musicians and musical traditions and maintained them intact to the present day.

Nettl (1978) observes similarly that Polish immigrants to the United States at the beginning of the 20th century retained their traditional Polish folk music "holding it intact in stable form", and more recently, Saighoe (1996) observes that the continuous performance of pre-migration music in a new environment occurs because the music continues to serve them in the new environment.

MUSIC AND INTER-ETHNIC RELATIONS IN MULTI-ETHNIC SOCIETIES

Further to Saighoe's (1996) observation, it must be stated that in multi-ethnic societies there are usually emotional reasons for wanting to preserve one's ethnic identity. Such reasons may range from a sense of inferiority, on the one hand, to supposed superiority, on the other, as well as socio-political or economic marginalisation. In Ghana, apart from a few inter-ethnic skirmishes, it can be generally said that the different ethnic groups live peacefully with their neighbours, but this is as far as each ethnic group acknowledges and respects the rights of other ethnic groups to be different.

However, there are perceivable socio-economic inequalities between the northern sector of the country compared to the southern sector, which leads to ethnic groups in the north migrating to the south to do menial jobs as farm hands and lately as porters. Ironically, these farm hands and porters, whose services are indispensable, are looked down upon by the very people who benefit from their services. The northerners resent this attitude, but for now they have no choice. To reassure themselves that they are citizens with equal rights and the right to maintain their ethnic identity, they hold on firmly to their values including their music.

In the case of the Ewe fishermen of Duakor and for that matter Ewes in general, it cannot be said that they feel inferior to other ethnic groups, but there is some kind of inexplicable mistrust between Ewes and Akans for reasons that are not supported by any rational arguments. The Ewe refer to the Akan as "eblu", which literally translates as

“muddled; not clear; not transparent” , which seems to explain the reasons for their mistrust.

The Akan for their part suspect the Ewe of possessing magical powers, which they may unleash on anybody who may incur their displeasure. Again, this has not been proved by any empirical evidence. The Ewe are also sometimes referred to by the Akan as “inward looking”, meaning that they are most comfortable only in the midst of their own kinsfolk. In spite of these prejudices, there are many instances of good relations among individuals of the two ethnic groups, as well as very successful inter-ethnic marriages between the two ethnic groups, albeit among the educated or literate social classes.

To get some kind of explanation for this mistrust, the researchers interviewed some individuals who wanted to remain anonymous. The individuals interviewed had stories to tell to buttress their claims. For example, a lady worker at the University of Cape Coast narrated to one of the researchers the difficulties she encountered while looking for accommodation. After an Akan landlady had failed to put her off by hiking the rent astronomically, the landlady finally told her bluntly that she did not want an Ewe as a tenant. The Ewe lady also related the flip side of her experiences with Ewe women fishmongers, who mistook her for an Akan and made unsavoury remarks in Ewe and had to apologise profusely when she confronted them in Ewe, thereby establishing her identity as being one of them.

One instance of this mistrust is captured in a comment made recently by a renowned Akan ex-captain of the national football team, when he expressed his opposition to the appointment of an Ewe referee to handle a football match between two rival football clubs because of the referee’s ethnic background. The culprit was officially reprimanded. Even though the culprit later apologised to the nation, the ripple effects of such pronouncements have incalculable undercurrents.⁴

The implications of the foregoing are clear. Both ethnic groups consciously or unconsciously avoid being associated with, or mistaken for, the other. They therefore negotiate their respective identities in a mutually exclusive manner. This is a reasonable explanation for the mutually exclusive nature of Duakor fishermen’s songs compared to the Cape Coast fishermen’s songs, as no direct answers could be extracted from the two sides.

The present paper deals primarily with the music of Duakor fishermen and as such is concerned with the aesthetic dimension of the culture of the southern Ewe people to whom these fishermen belong. The present authors have elected to focus on music in

⁴ See *Ghanaian Times* May 17, 2005, p. 16. “Mfum’s words rock Kotoko”.

this study because of its prevalent role in the preservation of the cultural identity of a people. "The importance of music ... is enormous. There is probably no other human cultural activity which is so pervasive and which reaches into, shapes and often controls so much of human behaviour" (Merriam 1964, p. 218). Music is not only important in the preservation of the culture of a people. As Clarke (n.d., p. 3) puts it, "Not only is music unique to each culture, it is considered to be one of the most stable and longlasting cultural components. Music is thus one of the vital keys to understanding culture and cultural identity", adding that, "Even though many other traditions may be lost, music remains an enduring element." An earlier observation with apt implications for this study is made by Leppert and McClary (1987, p. 102): "Music ... has always been a strong force in society, not only as it reflects and reacts to social forces but also as it helps shape a society and its culture ... the role assigned to music in the culture [is] primarily one of either affirming the status quo or at least not tampering with it."

SITUATING THE STUDY

The research design of this project is a case study/ethnographic study, which uses the participant observation method. Other methodological procedures are the use of interviews and the tape recording of the musical examples, the songs. Apart from visiting Duakor, the researchers asked the Anloga/Keta fishermen to listen to recordings of the Duakor songs and comment on whether the songs were still used in Anloga/Keta. The songs of the Anloga/Keta fishermen were also recorded for purposes of comparison. As a way of finding out whether the fishermen's songs were known to other members of the Ewe community in Cape Coast, some Ewe workers at the University of Cape Coast who were considered knowledgeable about Ewe culture were asked to listen to the songs and explain the subject matter of the songs.

The researchers visited Duakor between April and October 2004 to work with the fishermen after they had been granted permission and approval from the head fisherman of the community to conduct their research at the site. During this six-month survey period the researchers learnt that Duakor fishermen use work songs to enhance a "we feeling" amongst themselves and also to help them focus their attention on dragging the nets on specific beats of their songs. Duakor fishermen, unlike most other Ghanaian fishermen, do not go far into the sea to cast their nets and then spend a day or two at sea waiting for a catch before returning to the shore. One fisherman on a engine-propelled canoe first casts the nets a few hundred metres into the sea. Other fishermen, numbering between eight to twelve or more wait on the beach and drag the nets, sometimes for hours before the nets with the catch are pulled onto the beach. This method of fishing is referred to by Ahiawodzi (1997) as seine net fishing. While this is

going on, two or three instrumentalists, playing mainly bells and singing, provide music. To keep the fishermen alert, one of them shouts “eba” from time to time to signal them to drag the net on the beat of the music.

In March 2005 the researchers spent several hours (usually between 7am and noon) at the beach with the fishermen at work, helping them to drag the net and also recording their work songs. During this period we observed that young boys from Duakor, playing on the beach, would sometimes help drag the net. Even women customers waiting to purchase some fish would sometimes participate in this activity. We also noticed that the texts of some of the songs the fishermen were singing alluded to political events in Ghana and surnames of past political leaders like Nkrumah, Kotoka, Busia and Acheampong were mentioned. One of the songs goes as follows: Busia, the then Prime Minister (in 1970) deported all Nigerians who were resident in Ghana illegally. Busia was overthrown in a coup d'état (in 1972) led by Acheampong, who was presumably of Nigerian extraction. Acheampong was in turn overthrown by Akuffo. Why won't the Nigerians be brought back now that Acheampong and Busia are no longer in power? The Nigerians contributed much to the economy and social life of the country. Bring them back, says the singer Zadagli.

To trace the origins of some of the songs performed by the Duakor fishermen, Kofie, one of the researchers, took a trip to Keta and Anloga (from where these fishermen migrated) to interact with the fishermen there. Fortunately at Anloga he met a fisherman and former resident of Duakor, Dallix Senya, and also John Adedze, the head fisherman of Anloga, who assisted him in obtaining relevant information for this research.

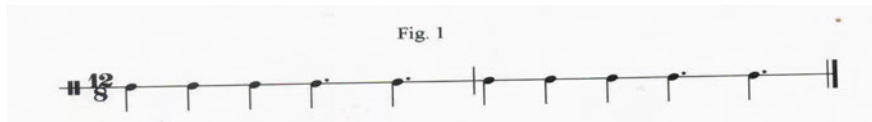
DATA COLLECTION/ANALYSIS

Eight of the Duakor fishermen's songs were recorded and their lyrics, *Atsyoha*, were written down; an English translation was provided. The themes of the lyrics were analysed and the analyses showed that all the songs were about social issues of the fishermen's hometown (Anloga/Keta) and not about Cape Coast. In fact, most of the lyrics refer to social and political events of the 1960s and 1970s. It should be noted that the two old men who are leaders of the Duakor fishermen, namely, Michael Kwasikpui, aged 71, who migrated to Cape Coast in 1958, and his colleague, Mawuko Gbikpo-Sosu, aged 68, who arrived in 1961, may have influenced the group's focus on events of the past. Etsey Akakpo, aged 41, son of the head fisherman, was born in Cape Coast, and speaks English and *Akan* (the language spoken in Cape Coast) fluently. Thus he acted as our interpreter in our interaction with the two old men.

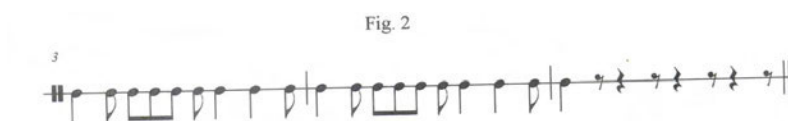
A second visit to Anloga/Keta in August 2005 was meant to trace links between the songs of Duakor and those of their place of origin. When the recorded Duakor songs were played to the Anloga fishermen, they commented that the themes and the lyrics belonged to the past and were no longer the subject matter of current songs performed in Anloga/Keta, although they admitted that the songs and the instruments, as well as the mode of performance were typical of their (Anloga/Keta) traditions.

This observation prompted the researcher to request the fishermen in Anloga to permit recordings of their present-day songs. The permission was granted and the data revealed that, while Duakor fishermen used metal bells as the instruments for providing accompaniment to their singing, Anloga/Keta fishermen no longer use metal bells but wooden clappers. They explained that they had observed that the fish seemed to have learned to avoid the nets when they heard the sound of the metal bells. One singer voluntarily performed some of the items with metal bells (not at the beach but at home) to prove to the researcher that they were capable of using the metal bells, but had stopped using them for the reasons already stated. Transcriptions of three common Ewe rhythms used by both Anloga/Keta and Duakor fishermen are provided below:

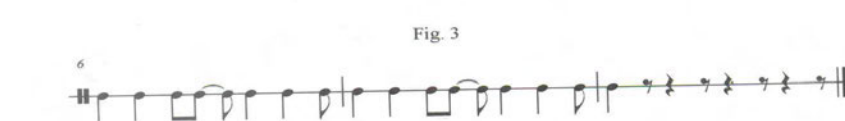
(a) First metal bell



(b) Second metal bell



(c) Third metal bell



The above rhythms are recurring and are performed for as long as the singing goes on.

It should be mentioned that, unlike other migrant Ghanaian ethnic groups which recruit newcomers to replenish their fold from time to time as noted in Saighoe's (1996) study, no new set of fishermen from Anloga/Keta had relocated to Duakor to join the earlier founding members. Duakor fishermen have links with their Anloga/Keta homeland and occasionally visit their homeland to participate in funerals and social events, but such visits are not very common. One major reason for visiting the homeland is when the corpse of a deceased member is conveyed home for burial. It is not obligatory for corpses to be buried in the homeland, and this is only done when the deceased may have expressly made such a request before his/her death. When Dalix Senya, the former Duakor resident, was asked whether he had any plans of returning to Duakor, he answered in the negative. The foregoing explanation seems to be the reason why the Duakor songs (not the rhythms) are old fashioned, and yet that is what reminds them of their origins.

FINDINGS/CONCLUSIONS

The data analysis has so far revealed that the music of the local Cape Coast fishermen has not influenced the music of the Duakor fishermen. In fact, the Duakor fishermen's songs are unique and peculiar to them and are not known by other people, not even other Ewe residents in Cape Coast who are not fishermen. In spite of their social interactions with the local Fante fishermen over the years, the Duakor fishermen have consciously tried to preserve their cultural (musical) identity.

The Duakor fishermen's songs are/were not composed by any of their members. The songs were brought from their homeland and their preservation is a psychological means of maintaining their links with their roots, even when current musical practices in their homeland have changed in certain ways. For example, some of the fishing songs used by Anloga fishermen are interspersed with English texts sung by a new generation of young fishermen: "What you sow is what you reap"; "Remember at last the six feet" (i.e. death); "Fight for your rights, brothers". These new developments are not traceable in the songs of the Duakor fishermen.

The researchers consider it important to make the following observation: the Duakor fishermen's songs seem to signal a reality which should not be downplayed. In the mid-to late 1990s there were ethnic clashes in various African countries, similar to those in Eastern Europe. The worst occurrence was in Rwanda. Ghana also had her fair share of such clashes. Although the said clashes were on a relatively small scale, they reminded

the nation that, in spite of claiming to be a nation, ethnic groups have identities which cannot be totally subsumed under a political entity, especially when one ethnic group consciously or unconsciously attempts to hold sway over another. Before the researchers undertook this study, they had often interacted with Duakor fishermen as customers and had heard their music many times, little knowing what their song texts were about. This study seems to signal some form of discontent, which may be an indication of similar cases in other songs of different ethnic groups. If music researchers could help social scientists to unearth such discontent before it reaches these alarming levels, music may well provide a window for policy makers. That is the importance of this contribution. Other countries may wish to learn from this contribution.

REFERENCES

- Agbodeka, F. (ed.) 1997. *A handbook of Eweland*, (Vol. I), *The Ewes of south-eastern Ghana*. Accra: Woeli Publishing Services
- Ahiawodzi, A. K. 1997. Economic activities. In Agbodeka (ed.), *ibid.* pp. 250–280.
- Clarke, G. L. n.d. The role of music in Alevi cultural identity
(<http://www.alewiten.com/gloria1.htm>) [Date of access 7/22/2005].
- Fiagbedzi, N. 1997. Music dance and drama, in Agbodeka (ed.), *ibid.*, pp. 153–176.
- Fiagbedzi, N. 2005. *An essay on the nature of the aesthetic in the African musical arts*. Accra: Royal Crown Press Limited.
- Gavua, K. (ed.) 2000. *A handbook of Eweland*, (Vol. II), *The northern Ewes in Ghana*. Accra: Woeli Publishing Services.
- Ghanaian Times* May 17, 2005. Accra: New Times Corporation, p. 16.
- Lawrance, B. N. (ed.) 2005. *A handbook of Eweland* (Vol. III), *The Ewe of Togo and Benin*. Accra: Woeli Publishing Services.
- Leppert R. and McClary, S. (eds.) 1987. *Music and society: The politics of composition, performance and reception*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Merriam, A. P. 1964. *The anthropology of music*. Evanston: Northwestern University Press.
- Nettl, B. (ed.). 1978. *Eight urban musical cultures*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.
- Overa, R. 1998. Partners and competitors: Gendered entrepreneurship in Ghanaian canoe fisheries. Dr. Polit. Thesis, University of Bergen.
- Ruud, E. 2006. Concepts (of identity) proposed by Even Ruud. Minutes of SSARN seminar held in Mthatha, 4–6 April 2006.
- Saighoe, F. A. K. 1996. Immigrants, their pre-migration music and the realities of the new urban environment, *Drumspeak: Journal of the Faculty of Arts, University of Cape Coast*, pp. 72–88.
- Slobin, M. 1970. Music and the structure of urban life in northern Afghanistan, *Ethnomusicology* 14/3, pp. 450–458.

ENCOUNTERING SOUTH AFRICAN MUSIC FROM AN AUSTRALIAN PERSPECTIVE: A KALEIDOSCOPIC VOYAGE OF DISCOVERY

Dawn Joseph, Deakin University, Australia

ABSTRACT

African music is a kaleidoscopic diversity: a rich mix of race, language, creed, colour and culture. A new approach to teaching and learning of African music explores the impact of “musical identity” and “teacher change” in Australian teacher education settings. This essay considers the findings of a project entitled *Masakhane: Music in the Making*. The Nguni word “*masakhane*”¹ (let us build together) aptly describes experiences of students at Deakin University, Melbourne. The essay also reports on a Melbourne teachers’ project (*Smaller Steps into Longer Journeys*) that investigated teachers’ use of African music in schools. The embedded and assumed goal in this essay is a call to challenge and transform current curriculum content and delivery, while questioning student and teacher perceptions of musical identity. Findings from interview, questionnaire and web-based survey data indicate that African music excels as a vehicle for promoting multiculturalism and cross-cultural understandings. It is argued that the inclusion of this new and different art form may shape and contribute to the creation and recreation of an individual’s perception, understanding, respect and tolerance of another music, culture and identity as part of a more global experience.

¹ The term *masakhane* (let us build together) is an Africa term taken from Nguni people. “The Nguni peoples are classified into three large subgroups, the Northern Nguni, the Southern Nguni, and the Ndebele. The Zulu and the Swazi are among the Northern Nguni. The Xhosa are the largest Southern Nguni society, but the neighbouring Thembu and Mpondo are also well-known Southern Nguni societies, often described as subgroups of the Xhosa. Each of these groups is a heterogeneous grouping of smaller (also heterogeneous) ethnic groups. Four of South Africa’s official languages are Nguni languages; primarily the Zulu, the Xhosa, the Swazi, and the Ndebele peoples speak isiZulu, isiXhosa, siSwati, and isiNdebele, respectively. Each of these languages has regional variants and dialects, which are often mutually intelligible” (Nguni, <http://countrystudies.us/south-africa/46.htm>)

PROLOGUE

This essay presents a theoretical framework for my teaching and research on encountering African music from an Australian viewpoint. It outlines some pertinent theoretical perspectives concerning musical identity, African music and culture, the concept of the “other”, music as culture, approach to teaching and learning and the notion of change. It concludes with some findings from the student² (interviews and questionnaire) and music teacher³ projects (web-based survey and interviews), indicating that African music excels as an appropriate vehicle for promoting multiculturalism and cross-cultural understandings, thereby leaning towards the *ubuntu* concept of music making. It is argued from a sociological perspective that the inclusion of this new and different art form may shape and contribute to the creation and recreation of an individual's perception, understanding, respect and tolerance of another music, culture and identity as part of a more global experience.

Music is a primary channel of communication and an effective vehicle through which people construct new identities and shift their existing ones, as spoken language does. I locate myself as an “agent of change” (teacher and researcher) currently working with Australian teacher education students of predominantly Anglo-Celtic backgrounds to give them an African music encounter that will influence and impact on their own musical identity. Since African peoples are ethnically, culturally and geographically diverse, only some generic commonalities were studied (oral/aural tradition, call and response, customs and traditions); students engaged mainly with South African and Ghanaian music through listening, moving, singing and playing.

² I undertook research at Deakin University with teacher education students (2003 and 2004) into the use of African music (students were in their fourth year of study of the Bachelor of Education Primary degree). The project called “Masakhane: Music in the making” included the teaching of the recorder, classroom instruments, as well as African instruments (*djembe*s, bells and rattles). The project reported on findings from questionnaire and interview data on attitudes, beliefs, competence and motivation, cultural and pedagogical understandings of generalist primary teacher education students in relation to a new genre (African music) through which music and culture was taught (Joseph 2002, 2003 & 2004).

³ The African music teacher project took place in 2004 through an anonymous web-based survey (see http://education.deakin.edu.au/music_ed/afr_mus-survey) for primary and secondary music teachers in Melbourne (see Joseph 2004 and 2005). In 2005 voluntary interviews were held with music teachers as an extension of that project. The focus of that project was to investigate the extent to which effective teaching and learning of African music take place at both primary and secondary schools in Victoria and how students' and teachers' identity might change with a new genre (see Joseph 2004 & 2005).

Within an Australian context music has moved from imperialism, assimilation, integration to multiculturalism (Southcott & Joseph 2005). Hence by experiencing and exposing students at university and school level to “the other”, there may be a kaleidoscopic voyage of discovery about African music and an enculturation into a new music identity. With respect to my voyage, thought process should move away from the Western thought process summed up by Descartes – “I think, therefore I am” – to the African thought process of *ubuntu*⁴ – “A person is a person by virtue of other people” (Oehrle & Emeka 2003, p. 39). Descartes’ idea fosters strong individualism, while *ubuntu* fosters the development of the communal spirit. These two ideas, as suggested by Oehrle and Emeka (2003), are opposite sides of the same coin, providing an opportunity to experience and explore one’s own music and identity and those of another.

LOCATING MYSELF IN AN AUSTRALIAN SETTING

As a South African music educator, I face the challenge of preparing Australian teacher graduate students in a global village to include a variety of musics and cultures. My own social location as a music educator is not one that comes from a privileged South African community. My work does not entail unconsciously constructing and rescuing my students; rather I strive to explore and make connections with the broad diversity of people, their lives, musical heritage and culture through the teaching of African music. Hence I position my teaching as a music-as-culture approach to teaching that is closely aligned to the notion of teachers as preservers and transmitters of their own cultural heritage (Campbell, Williamson & Perron 2001).

I find myself in what Mazrui (1986) refers to as a “triple heritage”, placed between three worlds—Indian, Western and African. I was born in South Africa, of Indian descent, grew up during the years of apartheid for more than three and a half decades before emigrating to Australia. The values, beliefs, and cultural and educational systems of “the rainbow nation”,⁵ are challenged in communicating African music to my Australian

⁴ The word *ubuntu* is a sub-Saharan African ethic or ideology focusing on people’s allegiances and relations with each other. The word has its origin in the Bantu languages of Southern Africa. Ubuntu is seen as a traditional African concept – “humanity towards others,” or “I am because we are,” or “A person ‘becomes human’ through other persons”, or also, “A person is a person because of other persons”. Another translation could be: “The belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity.” (see Ubuntu n.d.).

⁵ The term “rainbow nation” was coined by Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa (see Tutu, 1994). The rainbow people refer to all people of God both black and white. Tutu reminds us that we have different colours representing different people to make us the rainbow people of God. As South Africa has a unique composition of people of different

tertiary students. I align myself with the view that Campbell, Williamson and Perron (2001) refer to in their book *Traditional Songs of Singing Cultures*, namely that teachers are preservers and transmitters of their own cultural heritage. Habermas (2003) describes this form of communication as a powerful tool for people to learn from one another.

This learning from each other impacts on and influences one's identity, and recognising such communication helps one to understand and generate new knowledge. Therein lies the possibility of transformation, in that music identity is not something that is a fixed entity but rather a "transitional phase" identity (Kinchloe 1999), one that is ever-evolving. By connecting and reflecting upon my teaching and my students' cultural identity, I understand the consequence of my work in the social development of my students.

MUSICAL IDENTITY

Musical identity is a multifaceted phenomenon. Thorsén (2002) asserts that a person's identity is a mosaic – a unique set-up of dimensions that is influenced by a variety of factors (social class, ethnic heritage, national belonging, upbringing and religion). Hence we are constantly constructing our identity in relation to our heritage and aspirations. Fornäs (1995) claims that identity formation is a lifelong process rather than a product, and it is through our interaction with others that we create and reassess our identity (Björck 2000).

As a music educator, I am cognisant of the fact that my teaching of, and my students' learning of, African music is a form of social articulation of difference from a minority perspective within an Australian setting. I seek to empower cultural hybrids as part of an ongoing negotiation that emerges in moments of historical transformation at higher institutions. Music fundamentally shapes who we are and helps mould the image we have of ourselves, and the way we want others to perceive us (Bumbaco n.d.). It thus helps us to express aspects of our personal identity, national identity and youth identity. MacDonald, Hargreaves and Miell (2002) draw attention to the fact that many individuals also construct identities *within* music, for instance, as a performer or as a teacher. This position within music was evident in both the student and teacher projects in African music. I concur with Thorsén (2002), who believes that music is connected to identity and it is within such an understanding of one's own and other music that culture is then viewed as pluralistic.

cultures, people have to learn to live and work alongside each other and have an understanding of another.

AFRICAN MUSIC AND CULTURE

Although Australia is a pluralistic society, in teaching predominantly Anglo-Celtic students I endeavoured – like Ntuli (1999) – to “decolonise their music minds” and create pathways for dialogue to African indigenous knowledge and culture in the hope that students’ musical identity would be challenged by such “social travelling” (Palmgren, Löfgren & Bolin 1992). In Australia it seems essential to be familiar with music of “others” in order to understand what an Australian music identity is, because “the need for identity, which is the need to distinguish oneself, exists only with respect to others” (Civilization Corporation 2001).

The meaning of music in African societies is no different to its meaning in other societies. It has an aesthetic significance with long traditions and values that are associated with the people and represents part of their identity. A large part of that identity is the concept of music making, making meaning and sharing, which Nketia (1966) aptly describes as part of the traditional way of life, and not as embellishments of it. Music making is, therefore, an index of a living community and a measure of the degree of social cohesion among its respective units. Nketia’s student, Aduonum (1980), restates this view as follows: “African music is life, it permeates all daily activities” (p. 19). There is no single way to describe African music, “it is best understood not as a finite repertoire but as a potentiality of numerous repertoires of song and instrumental music that originate in specific African communities, performed regularly as part of play, ritual and worship” (Agawu 2003, p. xiv). Hence, African music can be conceptualised in terms of musical and extra-musical purposes forming a significant socialising aspect to the music. This view is supported by Nzewi’s (2003) notion that African music is “formulated” to perform differentiated tasks in the social, religious, political, economic and health systems (p.15).

An aspect of this varied task is the notion of using music as an education tool to learn about and or get to know other musics. Hence music serves as an engaging hands-on activity and/or experience, as well as a form of knowledge system. Such a knowledge system, Nzewi (2003) points out, can be reduced or transformed by educators for formal education. Hence it can be argued that what is transmitted *by* music is just as important as *how* it is transmitted (for more discussion see Amoaku 1998; Kidula 2003; Oehrle & Emeka 2003; Nixon, Uzoigwe & Kigozi 2003; and Nzewi 2003). Part of this transmission in arts education in Africa faces limitations in terms of time, materials, teacher abilities and curriculum (also see Flolu & Amuah 2003; Mans 1997, 2006; and Okumu 2004). Although music and society are closely aligned in Africa, Mans (2006) aptly makes the point that African education is socialisation, helping one to be humane in social,

spiritual and pragmatic senses (for more discussion see Asante 1987; Ani 1994; Blacking 1973, Mans 1997; Nketia 1998; and Nzewi 2003). Such an understanding provides an inroad for dialogue to learn about “other” music, people and culture.

CONCEPT OF “OTHER”

Hall (1984) believes that members of a given society internalise the cultural components of that society and act within what is culturally acceptable for that society. In his view, we become aware of this control mechanism only when it is severely challenged, for example, by exposure to a different culture. This essay argues that developing an inclusive approach to other types of music in a changing world is a constant challenge and necessity. The question to ask is “Why should we as educators provide such an experience of ‘the other’ to our students? How might this impact on their current musical identity?”

Thompson (2002, p.16) points out that “the other” is often constructed as a homogenised category which is “static to geographical spaces”, while Hall (1997) refers to the notion of “other” as “representing difference” as contingent and representative of diversity. In relation to this “difference” and “other”, music can be understood then as an aspect of the culture of which it is part and also contributes to the way people assert their identity.

Miller (1989) affirms that understanding the differences between cultures not only opens the way to a deeper appreciation of the people who create and use that music, but it also brings a new perspective to the Western musical world. In Africa “music” as a concept is commonly referred to as a verb rather than a noun, supporting the notion of “music as making and doing”. Elliott (1995) refers to it as “*musicing*” and Small (1998) uses the term “*musicking*”, describing the idea of *any* activity that relates to music.

Incorporating music of another culture, or finding oneself in someone else’s music, may assist in assimilating new elements and experiences into one’s own background knowledge, thereby establishing new understandings of musical style and the broader culture (Nketia 1988).

A KALEIDOSCOPIC VOYAGE: MUSIC-AS-CULTURE APPROACH

I refer to this section as a “kaleidoscopic voyage”. By crossing musical boundaries in a changing world, the inclusion of the “other” is a multicultural experience, although one’s practice does not always demonstrate a real awareness of what this might be. Reimer (1993) cautions that, because Australia has a “multi-musical culture”, care should be

taken not to marginalise or patronise one ethnic group's music over another. Hence the National Agenda for a Multicultural Australia (Office of Multicultural Affairs 1989) identifies a "cultural identity" dimension (the right of all Australians to express and share their individual cultural heritage) and a "social justice" dimension (their right to equality of treatment and opportunity and the removal of barriers associated with race, ethnicity, language, culture, religion, gender etc.) to overcome multicultural barriers and incorporate "the other". Such "dimensions" of inclusion create the opportunities to cross music boundaries in a changing world where music-as-culture can be a vehicle to effectively teach and learn beyond exoticism and tokenism.

The music-as-culture approach exposes students to other cultures and musics, thereby exploring what Oehrle (1991) calls "cross-cultural possibilities" more fully, richly and critically than previously. She adds that "a growing awareness of other cultures is not only more possible but also necessary to achieve" (p. 26). This is especially the case within an Australian context, given the diverse society in which we live and work. Volk (2004) points out that "the greater the knowledge one has about the culture, and the expectations or rules of its music, the greater the understanding, or perception of meaning, of that music will be" (p. 6). A challenge I face as a music educator is the need to find ways to encompass a broad range of musical genres in my teaching.

The use of African music in my own teaching at Deakin University and the African music teacher research project (see Joseph 2002, 2003, 2004 and 2005 for findings and discussions), reveal that the teaching and learning of African music as expressions of "the other" was seen as an effective way not only to cross music boundaries but to transmit music knowledge, skills, confidence, competence and understanding of another music and culture. I refer to Music here with a capital M as Campbell (2004) points out; few students know "Music" in its global and cross-cultural manifestations. Such knowledge, she claims, can only come by discarding "the West is best" perspective (Campbell 2004, p. xvi). My hope in my teaching and research is that students' and teachers' music identity may be receptive to change.

NOTIONS OF CHANGE

The topic of change in teachers and teaching is complex because of the very different approaches to the concept of change (Richardson & Placier 2001). The caption "*I think, therefore I am resistant to change*" (Duffy 2003, p. 1) aptly describes perceptions that both students and music teachers hold about engaging with a new music and genre, and how they may alter their musical identity. Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) consider

teachers as learners and schools as learning communities. It is through such pathways of educational change that the notion of “other” and multicultural music is considered.

Since learning and change are interconnected, the use of African music gave my students the opportunity to reflect and discuss wider social issues than just what they experienced aurally or visually in terms of sound and movement. Such an innovation was a “change in action”, something different to what students normally experienced at university. Within the school context, teachers reported (Joseph 2004) that the use of African music is an effective medium to teach other Key Learning Areas (KLAs).

FINDINGS: TRENDS AND FORECAST

This section of the essay reports on some findings regarding students’ and teachers’ constructing identity within African music through the notions of “change” and the “other”, drawing on what Brookfield (1995) calls a few “lenses” (one’s own reflection, student and music teacher data).

Student project: *Masakhane: Music in the Making*

During the years 2003 and 2004 I undertook research at Deakin University with teacher education students into the use of African music (students were in their fourth year of study of the Bachelor of Education Primary degree). I called this project “Masakhane: Music in the Making”, which incorporated the teaching of recorder; classroom instruments, as well as African instruments (*djembe*s, bells and rattles). The term *masakhane* suggests building together what students already know and enriching new learning experiences for them. The project reported on findings from questionnaire and interview data on attitudes, beliefs, competence and motivation, cultural and pedagogical understandings of generalist primary teacher education students in relation to a new genre (African music) through which music and culture were taught (Joseph 2002, 2003 and 2004). At the university level Western music was the only form of music taught in terms of the Orff, Kodály and Dalcroze pedagogy. After the introduction of African music, students stated through both interview and questionnaire data that their levels of motivation increased, they became more confident and competent in their ability to read and play and make music with others. “My confidence and knowledge have grown immensely. It’s more ... I feel a lot more comfortable with teaching something like this and actually participating in something like this rather than before I would never have done anything like it so, yeah absolutely, confidence has grown immensely”. The African method of oral and aural teaching took away the stress of reading formal notation and helped them enjoy and encounter music making within a social context.

Although students were engaged in a number of activities (singing, moving, playing instruments, dancing and dramatising the content of the songs and story telling), they contrasted the African understandings and learning styles with the Western tradition. This intercultural perspective provided a nexus between Western and African ways of knowing and consolidated this fusion of music with dance and movement. Some South African songs were taught in the language of Zulu,⁶ Xhosa,⁷ Sotho⁸ and Pedi.⁹ Initially these songs were studied as oral repertoire, as such the subject matter and context allowed for comparisons, contrast, variations, and similarities to be discussed.

Such a multidisciplinary approach incorporated African indigenous knowledge, which encompassed local knowledge that is culture- and context-specific. Students reported that they gained greater musical skills and knowledge about African music as it was “new”, “different” “exciting”, “rhythmic” and “real”. The music coming from Africa authenticated the experience for my students than just reading about it. “It was more real. Otherwise it would be just technical ... it was relevant and it is who you are and so you were able to teach it ... it’s part of your culture”. Another student said, “having you teach it made a difference. It means more coming from someone who knows the things they are talking about. I could read all I ever wanted about Africa, but I could not teach it with that same passion I guess that you showed us”. Students reported that such vibrant “hands on” engagement (singing, moving and playing) in African music challenged their music identity; they begun to ask questions about who they were. How did a new and different music now shape and change their appreciation of a new genre?

Students reported that their level of confidence and competence in drumming improved. The drumming experience provided a “space” where group camaraderie and bonding was cemented. “We learnt about timbre, beat accent and meter most effectively through drumming”. Although the learning of poly-rhythms was challenging for many students, they reported that “listening [was] an important aspect when learning about rhythms ... you can get lost in it if you don’t concentrate on your part and repeatedly play your part”. Students saw the strong relationship between music and movement, particularly through the African repertoire. They commented that, having experienced the African song and dance culture, they now understood how movement is inseparable from song. As one student pointed out in the interview: “Being able to see it on the

⁶ Name of song: *Thula thu*, a Zulu lullaby

⁷ Name of song: *Sifikil’ Ezibukweni*, a Xhosa action song

⁸ Name of song: *Ge re Sila*, a North Sotho call and response song

⁹ Name of song: *Ra Sila Mielie*, a Pedi work song

board is one thing, but having the opportunity to be part of it and sort of contribute your body in different ways was another”.

MUSIC TEACHER PROJECT: *SMALL STEPS IN LONGER JOURNEYS*

Having undertaken research with my university students on African music, I decided to further this investigation with music teachers at schools in Melbourne. The African music teacher project took place in 2004 through an anonymous web-based survey (see http://education.deakin.edu.au/music_ed/afr_mus-survey) for primary and secondary music teachers in Melbourne (see Joseph 2004 and 2005). In 2005 teachers were invited to participate in interviews as an extension of the project. The focus of that project was to investigate the extent to which effective teaching and learning of African music takes place at both primary and secondary schools in Victoria and how students’ and teachers’ identity might change in engaging with a new genre (see Joseph 2004 and 2005).

The teaching, acquisition and learning of African music may be seen as change in motion – “small steps towards longer journeys” as the title of the project suggests. When asked “How does African music particularly engage students in such a learning experience?” one respondent stated, “It gave them [students] a greater understanding of cultural diversity, music history and style”. Given the culturally diverse nature of the population in Melbourne, it was considered, as one respondent stated, “necessary for students to have a wider understanding of dress, culture, social and family life”. African music provides a platform for this type of cross-cultural dialogue. All respondents from the web-based survey stated the need for African music to be included in the curriculum because the students enjoyed it so much – many said, “They love it!” Such positive comments about transmitting a new music and its culture indicate that it is worth being taught at all levels in primary and secondary schools.

From the data it was apparent that African music gave students the opportunity to experience another culture through music. As one respondent remarked, “African music instils rhythm and excitement into any program ... it is emotive and usually accompanied by movement”. Another respondent commented that, “by engaging students with African music, students also came to understand how music and dance are inseparable in African culture ... something not common to Western culture”. By having African musicians or artists-in-residence teach African music, teachers stated that they benefited greatly and learnt just as much as their students. The notion of teacher as learner and the school as a learning community also made students and teachers “rethink” and question their music identity. As one teacher remarked, “Even though I was Western music trained, teaching predominantly Anglo-Celtic students, I started to

rethink about how I now teach and think about African music ... Having the artist-in-residence and engaging with African music made me much more aware of the social process of how music fits into the lives of African people”.

All respondents agreed that using African music creates a place in the curriculum for performing (singing, playing and moving). As one respondent stated, “It creates an atmosphere of team building in the class and everybody is involved in making music together”, hence the practice of ubuntu. This experience is often not the case in Western music, where we play for each other. This making of music “helps children experience and understand the deeper meaning of another’s culture”, as one respondent stated. This experience gave students the opportunity not only to explore music making at first hand, but also to hear the “story-telling” behind the music which helps to authenticate the transmission of African music to non-African settings. Such learning experience “promotes cross-cultural understanding and fights racism in schools through empathy and understanding”, as one respondent commented.

CONCLUSION

My own teaching was seen as successful as it incorporated new insights for both students and me, linking information and approaches not for their own sake, but to improve cross- and intercultural understanding, as well as instructional practice, hence challenging students’ music identity. The power and rhythm of the “drum and its people” in this instance provided a useful platform in terms of pedagogy, as well as cross- and intercultural dialogue for my students and me. As one student remarked: “We’re also on a level playing field, ‘cause all of us had different backgrounds in music but, when it came to something like African [music], very few of us – in fact none of us – have had the opportunity to actually play it and be a part of it and move to that type of music.”

In the main, respondents from the teacher project stated that the current use of African music in both primary and secondary schools provided them and their students with an understanding and knowledge that encompassed cross-cultural “awareness, competence and tolerance”; as one teacher remarked, “because we have children from different cultural backgrounds in the class, African music is something different from Western music and helps children learn something about those people and their lives and how they make music ... it helps our children appreciate what we have in Australia”.

The ideas in this essay arose out of the need to move beyond only teaching and learning about “Western music”, but rather to consider “the other” at both school and university level. In such thinking “for change” one moves beyond the notion of exoticism and

tokenism to broader meanings. From an Australian perspective, it is through such a kaleidoscopic voyage of discovery through African music that one adopts, adapts and acquires perhaps a new musical identity in a global and diverse world.

REFERENCES

- Aduonum, K. 1980. *A compilation, analysis and adaptation of selected Ghanaian folk tale songs for use in the elementary general class*. Unpublished Phd. Dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor., Michigan.
- Agawu, K. 2003. *Representing African Music: Postcolonial Notes, Queries, Position*, New York: Routledge.
- Amoaku, W. K. 1998. My world, your world, our world: the sounds that bind us all: developing the child musician in African societies. In C. van Niekerk, (ed.), *Ubuntu: Music education for a humane society*. Conference Proceedings of the 23rd World Conference of the International Society for Music Education. Pretoria: Unisa Press, 22–25.
- Ani, M. 1994. *Yurugu: An African-centered critique of European cultural thought and behaviour*. Trenton, N.J.: Africa World Press.
- Asante, M. K. 1987. *The Afrocentric idea*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Blacking, J. 1973. *How musical is man?* Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- Björck, C. 2000. *Identities in Transition: Young Black South Africans heading for a career in music*. Unpublished Master thesis in Music Education, Göteborg, Sweden, Göteborg.
- Brookfield, S. 1995. *Becoming a critically reflective teacher*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Bumbaco, S. n.d. Music Identity. <http://www.personal.psu.edu/users/s/j/sjb5007/> [Date of access: 13 January, 2005]
- Civilization Corporation (2001). Music and Identity. Canadian Museum of Civilization Corporation http://www.civilization.ca/arts/resonance/res5_10ehtml [Date of access: 13 January, 2005]
- Campbell, P., Williamson, S., & Perron, P. 2001. *Traditional Songs of singing cultures: A world sampler*. Miami, Florida: Warner Bros. Publication.
- Campbell, P. S. 2004. *Teaching Music Globally*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Clarke, D., & Hollingsworth, H. 2002. Elaborating a Model of Teacher Professional Growth, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 18, 947–967.
- Duffy, F. 2003. I think. Therefore I am resistant to change. *Journal of Staff Development*, 24(1), 1-10.
- Elliott, D. 1995. *Music matters: a new philosophy of music education*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Fornäs, J. 1995. *Cultural theory and late modernity*. London: Sage publications.
- Flolu, J. & Amuah, I. 2003. *An introduction to music education in Ghana: For universities and colleges*. Accra: Black Mask Limited.
- Habermas, J. 2003. *Truth and Justification*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Hall, E. T. 1984. *The Dance of Life: The Other Dimension of Time*. Garden City, N.Y: Anchor Press/Doubleday.

- Hall, S. 1997. *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Joseph, D. 2002. *Umoja: Teaching African music to generalist teacher education students, Research Matters: Linking outcomes with practice*. Proceedings of the XXIVth annual conference. AARME, Adelaide, 86–98.
- Joseph, D. Y. 2003. An African Music Odyssey: Introducing a Cross-Cultural Curriculum to Australian Primary Teacher Education Students. *Music Education International*, 2, 98–111.
- Joseph, D. 2004. *Smaller steps into longer journeys: experiencing African music and expressing culture*. Australian Association for Research in Music Education: Proceedings of the XXVIth annual conference. AARME: Melbourne, 216–225.
- Joseph, D. 2005. *Celebrating the use of African Music: Change in Motion. A celebration of voice*. ASME XV national conference proceedings. ASME: Melbourne, 128–153.
- Kidula, J. 2003. *Colonizing cultures and empowering ideologies: The process of an African identity*. Swedish-South African Network on Music and Identity Seminar, 18–19, September, Pretoria, South Africa.
- Kinchloe, J. 1999. The struggle to define and reinvent whiteness: A pedagogical analysis. *College Literature*, 26(Fall), 162–188.
- MacDonald, R., Hargreaves, D., & Miell, D. 2002. *Musical Identities*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Mans, M. E. 1997. *Namibian music and dance as ngoma in arts education*. Unpublished Doctoral dissertation, University of Natal.
- Mans, M. 2006 (in press). *Learning aesthetic values in African musical worlds, A handbook on learning aesthetics*. New York: Springer.
- Mazrui, A. A. 1986. *The Africans: A triple heritage*. London: BBC Publications.
- Miller, A. 1989. *Music Making: Survival and Celebration*. Mennonite Central Committee. <http://www.mcc.org?respub.occasional/26survival.html> [Date of access, 10 October 2003]
- Nguni, n.d. <http://countrystudies.us/south-africa/46.htm> [Date of access: 5 May, 2006].
- Nixon, M., Uzoigwe, J. & Kigozi, B. 2003. Musicianship. In A. Herbst, M. Nzewi & K. Agawu (eds.), *Musical arts in Africa: Theory, practice and education*. Pretoria: Unisa Press, 52–71.
- Nketia, J. H. 1966. *Music education in African Schools: A Review of the Position in Ghana*. International Seminar on Teacher Education in Music. Michigan: Ann Arbor: University of Michigan.
- Nketia, J. H. K. 1988. *Exploring Intercultural Dimensions of Music Education: A World View of Music Education*. Paper presented at the Proceedings of the 18th World Conference of the International Society for Music Education, Canberra, Australia.
- Nketia, J.H.K. 1998. The scholarly study of African music: A historical review. In R. Stone, (ed.), *The Garland encyclopaedia of world music*. Africa. New York: Garland Publishing, 13–73.
- Ntuli, P. 1999. The Missing Link between Culture and Education. In M. W. Mokgoba (ed.), *African Renaissance. The New Struggle*. Cape Town: Mafube/Tafelberg.

- Nzewi, M. 2003. Acquiring knowledge of the musical arts in traditional society. In A. Herbst, M. Nzewi & K. Agawu, (eds.), *Musical arts in Africa: Theory, practice and education*. Pretoria: Unisa Press, 13–37.
- Oehrle, E. 1991. Emerging Music Education Trends in Africa. *International Journal for Music Education*, 18, 23–29.
- Oehrle, E. & Emeka, L. 2003. Thought systems informing the musical arts. In A. Herbst, M. Nzewi & K. Agawu, (eds.), *Musical arts in Africa: Theory, practice and education*. Pretoria: Unisa Press, 38–51.
- Office for Multicultural Affairs 1989. Canberra: AGPS.
- Okumu, C. C. 2004. Local, traditional and global aspects of contemporary African music in South African television. In S-M. Thorsén, (ed.), *Sounds of change: Social and political features of music in Africa*. Sida Studies no. 12. Stockholm: Sida, 152-163.
- Palmgren, C., Löfgren, K., & Bolin, G. 1992. *Ethnicity in youth culture*. Stockholm: Youth Culture at Stockholm University.
- Reimer, B. 1993. Music education in our multimusical culture. *Music Educators Journal*, March, 21–26.
- Richardson, V., & P. Placier, 2001. Teacher change. In V. Richardson (ed.), *Handbook of research on teaching* (4th ed.). Washington, D.C.: American Educational Research Association, 905–947.
- Small, C. 1998. *Musiciking: The Meaning of Performing and Listening*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press.
- Southcott, J. & Joseph, D. 2005. *Other musics in the classroom: from assimilation to multiculturalism in Australian school music*. A celebration of voice: ASME XV national conference proceedings. ASME, Melbourne, 241–246.
- Thompson, K. 2002. A critical discourse analysis of world music as the “other” in education. *Research Studies in Music Education*, 19 (June), 14–21.
- Thorsén, S. 2002. Addressing Cultural Identity in Music Education. *Talking Drum*, 84, http://www.musik.gu.se/forskning_och_utveckling/pdf/Talking_Drum_22=01=02.doc.pdf [Date of access, 12 November 2003, 1–7.
- Tutu, D. 1994. *The rainbow people of God*. London: Transworld.
- Ubuntu n.d. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ubuntu_%28ideology%29 [Date of access: 13 May 2006]
- Volk, T. M. 2004. *Music, education, and multiculturalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

IDENTITY DYNAMICS IN POPULAR AND RELIGIOUS MUSIC: MARY ATIENO AND THE INTERNATIONAL FELLOWSHIP CHURCH CHOIR (IFC)

Jean Kidula, University of Georgia, Athens, USA

ABSTRACT

The International Fellowship Church (IFC) in Nairobi, Kenya, brought together middle-class individuals from diverse cultural and denominational backgrounds whose common language perforce became Swahili, a national lingua franca. Since 1975 the church choir's popularity rested on the ability of its members to integrate indigenous, national, pan-African and global musical dynamics.

This essay traces the development of IFC's choral style, highlighting the distinctive vocals of singer Mary Atieno emulated by emerging Kenyan vocalists since the 1980s. Using Mary Atieno and the IFC choir as catalysts, we discuss the construction, articulation, reinforcement and amalgamation of national identity through music. In Kenya in particular it invokes soundscapes and technology from nations with similar colonial histories, such as South Africa, and Sweden, a "small" country that used its technology and political position to amalgamate resources. A community was created using KiSwahili, "African" rhythms and "global instruments," in a politically "safe" space that for Kenya was Christianity.

INTRODUCTION

The musical identity and individuality of modern African nations is an evolving aggregate of the unique personalities and cultures extant in each country intersecting with pan-African and global encounters. Popular music has served to articulate, consolidate and defy national and government sentiment. Its musicians have become political, social and economical representatives at local, global or international arenas in the multiple exponentiations of the notion of "voice." In effect, the agency of African popular music and its carriers is not only characteristic of honoured and despised historical and cultural elements, but musical styles and performance practice are distinguished by the amalgam of ideas drawn from the collated cultures resident or

emanating from specific settings. Several studies in popular music have analysed components such as lyrics (e.g. Lwanda 2003) socio-cultural constituents (Gecau 1995), social history (Waterman 1990), history (wa Mukuna 1992), economic leverage or remittance (Malm & Wallis 1984), theory (Coplan 1982), biography (Freeth & Douse 2001), musical instruments (Kaye 1998) and musical notation (Rycroft 1961).

This discussion seeks to dissect the personality and possible identity of a national, urban (urbanised, urbanising) music in Africa. It situates the puzzle in the background, associates, contributions, compositions and performances of a Kenyan performer in order to analyse how national musical identity was amalgamated, constructed, articulated and reinforced through popular stylings. Musical identity is informed by socio-cultural and historical factors, structural, audio, video and motor dimensions (Kubik 1994), as well as author and reader intention, reaction and interpretation (Lafrance 2002, pp. 20–25). Popular is framed through the “socio-cultural processes of its construction” (*op. cit.*, p. 10) and the dominant audio and video materials such as instruments, the ways they are played, or the fact of broad appeal, production and consumption with the urban space as the main casing. “Popular” also encompasses the view that the music related to the general public, that is, it is “believed, embraced and perpetuated by ordinary people” (*Encarta World English Dictionary*, online).

BACKGROUND AND PREMISE

Currently in Kenya the dominant hegemonic popular styles are rap and gospel music, both of which have a main differentiating component, but each of which really relies on practitioners’ “successful” manipulation of whatever is defined as music in their worldview and the critique of its audience. Gospel music is differentiated by lyrics based either on the Bible or containing social and moral messages or opinions purported to be Christian religious. Rap, on the other hand, is characterised by semi-spoken declamations against some kind of musical background. The lyrics can be Christian religious, in which case, it would be termed “gospel rap”. While both gospel and rap are heavily disseminated, gospel wields larger economic leverage than rap mainly because the majority of rap’s clientele are either still in high school or are dependent on their families for cash. Radio is the largest promoter of the genre and home dubbings the primary method of circulation. Gospel, with a longer history as a mediated aggregating popular genre, provides a broader continuity base for analysis (Rycroft 1977).

For this analysis I selected Mary Atieno and her associates, beginning with the International Fellowship Church (IFC) choir to collaborations with other musicians. IFC had the longest history of popular gospel music in Kenya as a continuous unit. Atieno is

probably the most referenced gospel musician in Kenya as a role model. I believe this is not only with reference to her as an individual, but also for her advocacy of the musical genre she represents and in her collaborations with other musicians. While her gender was initially not a key factor in my study, research on women in religion at the global dimension (e.g. Sered 1994; Bynum 1984), in Kenyan Christian contexts (Teresia Wairimu, online; Margaret Wanjiru, online; Charisma and Christian Life 2001), Kenyan women creative artists (Kuria 2003), Kenyan women's voices (Kabira & Nzioki 1993) and Luo women (Odhiambo & Cohen 1989) lead me to "read" Atieno within that context among the various "axes" of ethnic, social, religious and musical identity. While I do not think Atieno's blindness provided her with leverage over her competitors, I examined journalistic accounts about how the blind in Kenya negotiate a place for themselves (Ngesa 2003). I also examined the nexus of orality and literacy, "live" and recorded processes, rehearsal and spontaneity represented in gospel music production and consumption, and how Atieno and her collaborators signify, represent and work out dynamics inherent in these seeming dualisms. For more particular musical analysis I purposefully selected three pieces to demonstrate Atieno's different musical ensemble types and how these powerful and popular songs derive or suggest stylings from her Luo heritage – representing multiple readings, interpretations and a springboard of her creative and collaborative synergies. Thus Atieno's identity federation in this study frames her in ethnic, social/urban, national, religious, musical, literary, gendered locations.

The choice of Mary Atieno was arrived at through a variety of factors. The most telling one was from interviews and conversations I carried out with musicians in and out of the Kenya Broadcasting Corporation studio in 1995 during field research on the impact of the religious programme *Sing and shine* (Kidula 1998). *Sing and shine* made gospel music into a national and lucrative phenomenon. Atieno was among the three people most mentioned by aspiring participants to have influenced Kenyan gospel music. Atieno and the IFC choir were nominated as seminal to the development of the genre. Producers of the programme acknowledged her as the first female unanimously agreed on for the pilot and maiden run of the programme. From our conversations, Atieno was not mentioned as a token affirmative action type of inclusion; she stands out as a performer, composer and role model for males and females in Kenya and Tanzania. Popular secular and religious female performers still mention drawing inspiration from Atieno's life and work (e.g. Artmatters, 2002–2004, Mutuku, 2005) and regard her as a mentor. Atieno is known and emulated for her "good," powerful and expressive voice. In my survey of producers, presenters, singers, instrumentalists and audiences in Kenya in 1995 on trendsetters in gospel music, Atieno was prominent for her outstanding voice.

She was also nominated for her ability to create energy in performance with her textual and musical ad libs.

Atieno as a gospel musician performs alone, with her husband Alex Ominde, with a small ensemble and with a choir indoors, outdoors with or without amplification, and in the studio. The recording output demonstrated varied proficiency in composition and performance, with some pieces tightly rehearsed and presented, well thought out compositions and arrangements. Other pieces on the recordings were not as tightly rehearsed, but they were nonetheless showcased.

ATIENO'S ETHNIC, LITERARY AND RELIGIOUS FORMATION

Mary Atieno was born in 1961 in Homa Bay district (Kenya) of Luo linguistic and cultural heritage. Her father was Christianised by Roman Catholic Mill Hill brothers. The family embraced Catholicism whereas the majority of Homa Bay's population were Seventh Day Adventist. Because she was blind, Atieno first attended St Oda Boarding School for the Blind run by Catholics close to her home. For higher grades, she moved to the Salvation Army-run Thika School for the Blind. Atieno later joined the non-denominational Pentecostal IFC fellowship in 1979 at the encouragement of her stepmother after a healing incident. Atieno had dropped out of school because of illness, but later went back to complete high school, attended Kenyatta University for a BEd in literature and religious studies, and has been a high school teacher since 1988 at BuruBuru Girls High School in Nairobi.

I believe there is great significance in the times in which Atieno was born and grew up that can be read as informing her musical and national identity. Born in 1961, two years before Kenya's political independence from British colonists (1963), she identified herself not only in ethnic and national terms but as a "free" citizen. She grew up during the period of national independence formation, consciously schooled to embrace herself as a Kenyan. She is among a crop of children whose parents, caught between the colonial and nationalist administrations, fought to dislodge the British presence. Atieno's generation provided an experimental field for the formulators of Kenyan national ideology and identity. Her identity formation continued through the political ideologies presented by the three presidents who have controlled independent Kenya to date. Atieno has also shaped others as a high school teacher of literature and religion, and as a singer of religious and national repute.

Atieno spent most of her formative years, like many Kenyans of her generation, in boarding school. Although her parents lived in a rural area, she was urbanised. The boarding school, urban space and Christian religious institutions were initially

introduced in Kenya to de-ethnicise, civilise, Christianise and even retrain the African to cater to European worldviews, economic and political aspirations (Odhiambo & Cohen 1989). These spaces fragmented language groups and cultural associations, while amalgamating ethnic and national affiliation. Christianity had already posited drastic departures from indigenous cultural belief systems, systems that were essential identifying demarcations.

Boarding school and new educational systems were the first stages of physical alienation and exposure to alternative ways of thinking about and structuring the world. Isolation engendered affiliation to cultures and denominations beyond Luo culture and Roman Catholicism. The musical styles of the Salvation Army were a radical shift from the conservative Catholic chants in rural Homabay. Interaction with children from other cultures consciously or otherwise pronounced individual and ethnic peculiarities. A “neutral” culture, here Christianity, provided linkages. Furthermore, this residency provided distance from which cultural memory was invoked for nostalgia or comfort, ensuring a type of bridge to “strange” spaces, and unwittingly archiving things missionaries and educators sought to eradicate. Students sang “folk” songs from their diverse backgrounds, thereby learning the ways of the song teachers and legitimising new functions for genres in diaspora.

Atieno’s relocation to the urban area marked a further alienation. As an urbanite, Atieno’s associations allowed her to sample multiple music cultures. Of importance was the use of KiSwahili, a language associated with nationalism and Islam, the other competing global religion. While English in an independent African nation was a compromise well understood for modernity and globalisation, Kenya’s African integrative identity was coded in Swahili, the language of the urban middle and lower class – the majority of Kenya’s urban population. KiSwahili’s association with Islam initially led to hesitation to use it among the Christianised rural population, but its legitimisation as a national language and use as a lingua franca in multi-ethnic and urban situations overrode an uninformed relationship with a competing global religious system.

ATIENO’S MUSICAL IDENTITY FORMATION

When I first interviewed Atieno in 1995, she adamantly stated that she was an Alto, uncomfortable with singing the melody parts normally in the highest voice. At the time churches used British choral SATB with a higher pitch placement than in most Kenyan cultures. The melody was almost always in the soprano voice. Choirs in Tanzania (singing in a similar genre as IFC in Kenya called *makwaya*) had begun to subvert that

idea by locating the melody in the middle female voice. As Atieno's comfortable voice was in a lower range, her response was understandable. Socialised to think of herself in the choral church styles of the time, she could "call" but reverted to the alto part in response.

Not long after our conversation, she produced a cassette where she sang not just the lead but also the melody voice in response. This performance shift testified to her development since her debut in grade school choirs to involvement with chamber singers in high school beyond the school choir. Her high school small ensemble group, *Christ's Ambassadors*, included Reuben Kigame, a groundbreaking gospel musician who continues to contribute to her musical formation. Students at Thika School for the Blind are drawn from all parts of Kenya. They bring their upbringing in different ethnic and Christian musics to school. As a Salvation Army establishment, the denomination superimposes its unique musical styles onto this assortment. The school is also well known for its choir but more for the brass bands unique to a handful of schools in Kenya. Thus Atieno was exposed to a wide range of ethnic cultural, rural and urban popular, Christian religious, and European and American folk and popular music. The music was in choral, instrumental and dance media styles. This environment facilitated fusion of styles resulting from the consolidation of, or experiments in, creative ideas.

Atieno later joined the International Fellowship Church (IFC) Choir, where her musical growth can be traced from recordings and interviews with colleagues. IFC was located in Buruburu, a lower-middle-class section of Nairobi. The choir's members came from different Kenyan ethnic groups and other African countries. Members learnt to compose and arrange their own songs. The members drew from Kenyan ethnic, African indigenous and urban popular music and arranged the music according to stylistic demands of the Kenyan academic music elite (Mensah 1998). When analysing the lyrical content and musical arrangements by the choir, one is made aware of how the backgrounds and heritage of the dominant individuals in the choir stamp their mark by invoking their music and cultural histories. Atieno asserts that "people who sing a particular song stamp their identity on it and invite or appeal to a certain type of participant or listener" so that the song text, song style or singer provides the song its peculiar identity (1995 interview). IFC created or asserted a particular identity for the music they performed. At first Atieno sung the alto part in the choir. Soon she was given solo roles. Her voice is cautious and contained in the early recordings. She sang as instructed by Symekher, the choir director, with tentative individuality. But as her voice and confidence developed, her personality was stamped on some songs. Though she composed in English, Swahili and her native DhoLuo, Swahili songs gained national

popularity. She learned to conceal her ethnic identity in the pronunciation and intonation of Swahili text, embracing an urban persona in singing.

GOSPEL MUSIC, IFC AND NATIONAL MUSICAL IDENTITY ENGAGEMENT

Gospel music in Kenya is a popular music differentiated from others by its lyrics. It shares instrumentation and stylistic features with other popular musics. Anyone claiming to be a Christian can perform this music. While it initially was sung in English with a Southern gospel and US contemporary Christian root, it soon gained a character of its own based on Swahili lyrics, African ethnic and popular stylings, and the invocation of Kenyan indigenous music cultures.

As a phenomenon, religious popular music has been the most lucrative commercial and cultural musical genre not only in Kenya but in other African countries (see e.g. Chitando 2002). Musicians who begin in “secular” music often cross over into gospel rather than the other way round. Or else they dabble in both the “sacred” and the “secular.” Styles of music considered dance music in one country are appropriated in another without the same connotations. The interchange of “spiritual” and “carnal” music – terms that I think best describe the reactions of the audience – is a vibrant nexus that probably reiterates an African definition of music as beyond sound – bundled in what some call musical arts (Herbst, Nzewi, & Agawu 2003) – as an integrated fusion of art forms, a locus of educational import, a hub for amateurs, professionals and their audience, all critiquing and feeding off each other’s energy. The church or religious space provides a safe environment for this dialogue, and it becomes a school, archive and laboratory. Christianity in its various denominations is divisive, quick to condemn new ideas yet strangely tolerant of separatists. Such charity consciously or unconsciously expands musical offerings to cater to diverse groups. This variability negates the notion of a closed identity structure, opening possibilities for dynamism.

Gospel music, like the institution it pretends to promote, is a safe kind of music, whose lyrics demarcate it from other genres. It was originally from the lyrics and their presentation in the Swahili language that national identity was engaged. A constant theme in my conversations and interviews with Atieno and other musicians was the importance of lyrics. This refers not only to the lyrical content, but the source and structure of those lyrics. These debates about acceptable content, opinion, context and format resonated in religious radio and television programmes. Musicians constantly drew lines between those singing words verbatim from the Swahili Bible, compared interpreting or exegeting the text, and those moralising and/or sacralising human experiences. The variables were as many as the musicians and the denominations

represented. Lyrical structures were usually predetermined – in stanza, stanza-refrain, or refrain form. The other set frame was the predominant application of the major key with little modulation and few accidentals. Instrument types were those used in popular music – guitars, drum sets, brass and electronic instruments, etc.

Gospel music is divisive and divisible. It is cumulative and yet not, for it draws from many sources yet it is ambivalent in its selection of those resources, at times condemning the source and at times redeeming it, essentially leading to retraction. National engagement drew from a variety of sources and resources, invoking ethnic identity to differentiate the styles from those of other African countries, yet integrating national, global and pan-African ideas in formal structures and instrumentation. For example, an “ethnic” rhythm was redeemed from initial condemnation by Euro-American missionaries by playing it on a modern globally recognised instrument. Yet these very popular instruments such as the guitar were also condemned as secular, and provoked a tension within an audience desiring the secular association to be overlooked in favour of modernism. Gospel musicians by reputation and lyrics provided a way to retrieve and reinstate African elements in contemporary urban spaces. Airing the product on state-controlled airwaves legitimised and nationalised the genre by the ruling regime.

ANALYSIS OF GOSPEL MUSIC BY ATIENO AND THE IFC CHOIR COMPLEX

The following analyses of three pieces demonstrate notions of condemnation, redemption and retraction presented in IFC choral music. They also illustrate Atieno’s growth as a musician, initially as a performer led and guided by Isaya Symekher, the IFC choir director, and her subsequent flowering as a composer and performer. These examples explore the intersection of Atieno’s ethnic, religious, educational, literary, popular and urban identities. They provide those distinctive features that characterise notable music and performers. Nationalising elements are mainly found in the language used – KiSwahili. The instruments used and the types of musical styles represent international “modern” aspects. Peculiarity of elements is contained in the compositions drawn from the backgrounds, influences and creativity of the musicians involved.¹

IFC compositions were collective and individual, in oral and written notation, improvised and fixed. Words, always written out even if the music was not, merged literacy and orality, bespeaking dialectics of composition and song ownership in the Kenyan nation with the international industry and academy. The textual and formal

¹ Tapes available on web, e.g. <http://www.swordofthespiritministries.net/gospelmusic.htm>. See discography for particulars.

frame was preset, but the interpretation varied. Thus the same piece was adjusted for different audiences, contexts and venues. To compose, Atieno arrived at a tune or a text from reading the Bible, from a sermon, from an experience, and other sources. She first sang the song to herself and then taught it as both a memory aid and for critique first to an individual then to the group. The critique addressed melodic or lyrical structure, possible arrangement, and appropriate performing ensemble. The group's reception, rejection or adjustment of certain elements legitimised or invalidated the composition. Further refinement occurred when parts and instruments were added. All gospel songs are harmonised by adding voice parts, instruments, or both. Instrumentalists further framed the composition with introductions, interludes, codas, or even changed the style altogether. A public performance with audience reaction and feedback continued the refining process. The indefinite audience that bought the final recorded version validated the composition and performance by making covers and other versions of the piece and by requesting it on radio and TV programmes.

The pieces analysed conceptualise different aspects of Christian belief and practice, that of God's redemptive work and the Christian's continuing proselytising role, the Christian's destiny of hope of eternal life in a new space that is like a pure and glorified version of the current poor reflection of man's present abode, and the Christian's call to worship, a theological tenet and service, that of worshipping the Christian God, because there is none like him. The pieces also represent the maturing of Atieno's musical ideas and identity. They have further been selected for their invocation, subversion or appropriation of a music style rooted in Atieno's Luo culture.

BWANA YESU ANAKUPENDA (THE LORD JESUS LOVES YOU)

Bwana Yesu anakupenda (1979), performed by Mary Atieno and The IFC Choir, was recorded at the Pentecostal Assemblies of God studio on Valley Road, Nairobi by Swedish national, Carl Andersson. The textual structure of the piece is: partial refrain – verse – full refrain – half verse – full refrain – verse in variation – full refrain. The partial refrain is a phrase in call and response with a tenor solo by Symekher and choral response. The choir completes or answers the solo. Verse phrases are call and response, with the call by Atieno. The full refrain and half verse are each made up of three lines. For the verse in variation, each half phrase is in call and response, a phrase diminution with eight lines, simulating the idea of a groove.

This piece is tightly and carefully structured with no improvisation expected. The choir is not only well rehearsed, but well blended with each voice clearly defined. The instruments are standard popular instruments of the time, bass guitar, rhythm guitar

and solo guitar with percussion. The style departs from the *makwaya* music of the era in that it uses an overt popular bass lick based on *mbaqanqa* stylings (after Mahlathini and Mahotella Queens of South Africa), but instead of having a bass groaner, there is a tenor crier and an alto caller. For most Kenyans, this was not dance music. Thus, a South African popular style was appropriated, subverted and redeemed from “sinful” dance beats because of the lack of such associations for Kenyan listeners. Atieno’s choir director, Isaya Symekher, had dabbled in secular music with a fondness for the Mahlathini group and an admiration for South African songstress, Miriam Makeba. He coached Atieno to sound like Makeba. Symekher, who had some formal music training, aspired to the tone colour and arrangements advocated by the Kenyan music academy. Though Atieno had sung solos before, in this recording debut she was complemented by Isaya’s tenor.

The instrumental arrangement is a counterpoint of distinctive voicing. The bass line should not be read as a chord progression, but a phrase. It was to this phrase that the lead guitar, playing in its lower range, responded. According to Symekher and Atieno, the instrumentalists worked out their own parts, but the leadership and choir critiqued their licks if they did not fit or sound right. Thus, while individual musicians composed, their contribution was redirected by consensus. The result is a dense counterpoint of solo against voice, solo contrasting with solo, solo against the bass guitar, variations of the melodies against the lead and bass guitar licks.

This choir received favourable reviews for sensible and well-constructed lyrics founded on fundamentalist Christian views. The almost professional execution of the performance was lauded as something other choirs of the era did not do well. The arrangement moved away from the high placement of melody practised in mission churches. The cyclical and seamless character of the song was indigenous contemporary African, modern popular but religious. This, I believe, is a seminal piece that juxtaposed those “safe” elements of overt club-dance popular music with the middle of the road *makwaya* structures and performance practices. While movement was implied, it was not applied as such behaviour was unacceptable. But more than this, I believe this rhythm was easily acceptable in Atieno’s musical memory. The tempo and swing of the song resembles a style called *dodo*, which is dominant in Atieno’s ethnic group. This is a type of redemption of “African” cultural dance rhythms by their incorporation into Christian religious urban and educational practice, not as imposed or suggested by colonists or the ruling elite, but by the people, the masses, the public.

The recording was engineered by Swedish missionary, Carl Andersson, in a Pentecostal church studio in Nairobi. Andersson, a Swedish national, was brought up in Burundi by missionary parents. His technical knowledge of radio and recording equipment due to

his university training in Sweden and his knowledge of European and North American Church music, combined with African musical preferences and aesthetics garnered from his formative years, provided a credible basis for contemporary African Christian music production. He brought to the table not just ideas about European and Scandinavian religious choral musical preferences, but was familiar with the music stylistics from Central Africa popular in Kenya (Kidula 2004). IFC musicians combined Kenyan indigenous, religious and nationalistic linguistic and musical ideas with South African popular styles. The studio collaboration of Andersson and the IFC choir in the late 1970s brought together local Kenyan, pan-African and European ideas in producing a recording of superior quality to other *makwaya* pieces on the market. In fact, IFC's output moved beyond the *makwaya* category and became part of the regular soundscape of national secular or religious radio programmes. The dichotomy that removed religious music from African daily living was being broken.

TWAINGIA YERUSALEM MPYA (WE ARE ENTERING THE NEW JERUSALEM)

Twaingia Yerusalem Mpya (produced 1990) was recorded by Atieno and the IFC choir without Symekher.² The album contained compositions by Atieno and other choir members with additional editing by other singers, instrumentalists and producers. The song became the signature tune for the program *Sing and Shine* for a while. The emotions in this song about entering the New Jerusalem are exuberant, with the choir sounding like a throng. The bass is a fusion of South African *bubblegum* stylings camouflaged by vocal enthusiasm, once again subverting the dance elements.

The textual structure is: half refrain – verse – full refrain – verse – full refrain – half verse – full refrain. The piece is symmetrical with 4 or 8 lines of refrain and eight phrases of verse divided into call and response. The response completes the sense of the call, but not necessarily the sentence, so that one sentence may go over two phrases. This kind of phrase extension is daring. One cannot sing half a verse and feel complete. Each full verse must therefore be sung out. Here, Atieno's African storytelling base and training in literary writing and style are foregrounded. She tells a story not alone but with others. In recounting her story, it relates and intersects with those of others in her world.

In the refrain Atieno is bold in her creative and performance practice. She does not just call, she lines out the first word of the phrases, ad libs and exclaims. She explained that sometimes in the studio she got carried away and continued on or repeated a line. The

² A sound sample available at <http://www.amefufuka.com/shop/amominde.php>

choir remained alert and responded accordingly. These elements were not edited out by the producers.

That spontaneous energy is what sold the music, as it feels tight but is executed in a relaxed manner. Here, Atieno reclaims a storytelling technique and learning strategy, where a teacher tests her students' alertness by unexpectedly calling a line for the group to complete. The students are therefore engaged as participants and creators, even while they are learners and consumers.

Apart from the bass line, the other instruments have an accompanying and energising role rather than a dialogic one. The flexibility of live drums gives way to studio preset rhythms. Atieno's textual interpretations and interpolations are linguistically derived rather than constricted by the rigidity of the metronome. Unlike the first piece, where *dodo* music and dance stylistics were implied but subverted, this piece overtly and undoubtedly appropriates the style from Atieno's ethnic group. The audience motor response is this dance rather than keeping time in the inflexible *makwaya* step-left step-right motion. Further, the group's motor response and musicking incorporated not just leg motions but movements of the torso associated with dance.

NANI KAMA YEHOVA (WHO IS LIKE JEHOVAH)

In *Nani kama Yehova* (produced 1998), Atieno and Ominde, her husband, perform the solo parts and responses with vocal overdubs. They informed me that they composed the song together, but the instrumentation was by Ominde and Reuben Kigame. The collectivity of composition is reiterated in performance. The structure of the text of the piece is: verse-link-chorus. The eight-phrase verse is sung solo by Atieno. The link has four lines in call and response, with Ominde calling with trio response made up of Atieno's first line of the first verse. Ominde's link has a different text after each verse. The chorus is in call and response. Ominde first calls alone and a trio responds. He begins the second call alone, but it continues as a duet into a trio. The chorus response line is a response to the text or a continuation of the sentence. This piece suggests South African dance rhythms and instrumental effects prevalent in the late 1990s, together with Luo stylings and Kenyan urban popular styles, including *benga* (Stapleton & May 1987, pp. 230–234). The piece, however, redeems Kenyan urban dance styles that are performed and accepted in many evangelical gatherings. But it is also a transitional piece, building on the IFC legacy. The textual articulation bows to the tyranny of the studio drum. But this tension is diffused in the last call of the refrain, where singers have a swing approach to the rhythm. At this period Atieno is more at ease with her own ad libs and expressive liberties. She almost returns to the tight rehearsal ideas found in the

1979 recordings. She consolidates a variety of styles reflecting the urban and multivocal character of her contemporary culture.

In performance Atieno consolidates disparate worldviews that inform the modern national landscape. Individual contributions make up the mosaic of identity that are remoulded, historicised and documented in different media. Ideas that emerge “before their time” are shelved and later revisited in original or reworked versions. Because of copyright and ownership issues, some songs are claimed as originating in the group that first records them. But the nature of church music is such that broad dissemination and performances by many congregations empower the song. The identity of a gospel song resides in its lyrics, style, performers and consumers.

READINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Modern African nations created by European expansionists inherited the music divisions created by Europe to manage the output of different social classes (Bohlman 2004). However, folk, popular and classical categories framed in European political and social history cannot be superimposed on the African soundscape wholesale. Trends in African music history, output and economy defy such neat classifications. Cataloguing peoples as rural, urban, cultured, literate and illiterate may work well in politically powerful nations, but these categories are blurred in many African societal historical processes at any level. That in itself creates a problem in the demarcation, categorisation and classification of musical styles.

Researchers in African music have classified musical styles by ethnic or social group and location, by function, by gender and by structural elements. This kind of classification works well for an audience outside Africa. But well-known African musicians invoke a variety of sources for structure and change the style to fit the audience or occasion. In order to dissect the personality and possible identity of music considered African, I chose an approach that analysed the output of individuals located in particular spaces and working in a diversity of circumstances. The primary demarcations I made about Africanity have been with respect to geographical and cultural location, and the fact that the musicians operate mainly in Africa and/or that they have been nurtured in cultures or language systems considered African or Africanised. This nurture is evident in the way they musick.

I hypothesise that women, more than men, are not only more effective culture bearers and nurturers, but also innovators influencing and forming children regardless of gender (Sered 1994; Lwanda, 2003). Women thus effect continuity more smoothly than men, incorporating change as a matter of course. This is particularly true in modern Kenya,

where the rural family was fragmented first by colonial and national governments' labour demands, which led to an exodus of men to farms, mines or urban areas, leaving women to manage the culture; more recently the scourge of AIDS has left children in the hands of women. While men mingled and learnt new ideas in towns, thereby forging new musical alliances abroad, women and other rural cultural managers either took up powerful musical structures that bespoke indigeneity or catalysed the new sounds into the contexts of their lives. This open-ended argument could possibly explain some of the dynamics of musical retention and accommodation, but it does not account for women who relocated and worked solo or in concert in urban arenas.

Atieno's achievements are more remarkable given her gender and disability in a continent that has historically had an ambivalent relationship with its women and disabled persons. It is common knowledge that more women than men attend church or frequent religious gatherings. Kenyan laws of inheritance have marginalised wives, mothers and sisters. Thus while women work the land, men own it (Abwunza 1997) and manage land-generated income (Odhiambo and Cohen 1989). Other studies show that women who work in religious spaces attain privilege without the associated powers (Jules-Rosette 1987), obliging female theologians to call for the recognition of African women's contributions (Oduyoye and Kanyoro 1992; Mbugua, 1994). The paper theorises the view that many women in Africa with remarkable contributions seek the good of society more than personal fame. Their achievements rather than their gender should be the focal point (Kuria 2003). Examples of such people are not just foreign women but contemporary Kenyans such as Teresia Wairimu Nilsson, a famous evangelist, whose religious crusades, begun in her living room to help others manage their particular struggles, expanded to the country's largest stadium long before Kenyan male preachers with such a following emerged. Wangari Maathai's environmental work, started as a way to replenish the countryside with trees, became a global movement, resulting in her becoming, in 2005, the first African woman to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Atieno is certainly walking in these paths. She does not seek fame for herself. She sees herself as an educator, with the gift of a voice that she hopes will benefit those who listen to her lyrically, religiously and musically. Her output has generated a pathway for the construction of national identity.

REFERENCES

- Abwunza, J. 1997. *Women's power, women's voices: Dialogues of resistance from East Africa*. Peterborough Ont.: Broadview press.
- Artmatters. 2002–2004. African Musicians as instruments for change. Interview with Achieng Abura <http://www.artmatters.info/abura.htm> [Date of access September 3, 2005].

- Atieno, M. 1995. Interviews with the Author. June to September 1995.
- Atieno-Ominde, M. & Ominde A. 2005. Email and telephone communication with the author, August–September 2005.
- Bohlman P. V. 2004. *The music of European nationalism: cultural identity and modern history*. Santa Barbara, Calif. : ABC-CLIO, 2004.
- Burns, L. 2002. “Close readings” of popular song: intersections among sociocultural, musical and lyrical meanings. In L Burns and M Lafrance (eds.): *Disruptive divas: feminism, identity & popular music*. New York: Routledge, pp. 31–61.
- Bynum, C. W. 1984. Women’s stories, women’s symbols: A critique of Victor Turner’s theory of limination. In R Moore and F Reynolds (eds.), *Anthropology and the study of religion*. Chicago: Center for the scientific study of religion, pp. 105-125.
- Charisma and Christian life. 2001, July. Former occultist is now first female Pentecostal pastor ordained in Kenya, <http://www.charismamag.com/> [Date of access September 3, 2005].
- Chitando, E. 2002. *Singing culture: a study of Gospel music in Zimbabwe*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.
- Coplan, D. 1982. The urbanisation of African music: some theoretical observations. *Popular Music* 2: 113–129.
- Encarta World English Dictionary*. [Date of access: September 25, 2005].
- Freeth, N. & Douse, C. 2001. *Great guitarists*. San Diego, Calif.: Thunder Bay Press.
- Gecau, K. 1995. Popular music and social change in Kenya. *Media, culture and society* 17 (4), 557-575.
- Herbst, A., Nzewi, M. & Agawu, K. 2003. *Musical arts in Africa: Theory, practice and education*. Pretoria: UNISA Press.
- Jules-Rosette B. 1987. Women and new roles in African societies – Privilege without power: women in African cults and churches. In R. Terborg- Penn, S. Harley, A. B. Rushing (eds.), *Women in Africa and the African diaspora*. Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, pp. 101–120.
- Kabira, W. M. & Nzioki, E. A. 1993. *Celebrating Women’s resistance*. Nairobi: New Earth Publications.
- Kaye, A. L. 1998. The guitar in Africa. In R Stone (ed.), *The Garland encyclopedia of world music. I: Africa*. New York: Garland, 350–369.
- Kidula, J. N. 1998. *Sing and shine: religious popular music in Kenya*. Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California Los Angeles.
- Kidula, J.N. 2004. Cultural amalgamation and (re)construction: national music consciousness in Kenya. In A. Ojo (ed.), *Vocalizing Africa: perspectives in governance, education, resource management and health in Africa*. Atlanta: Platform Press, 128–143.
- Kubik, G. 1994. *Theory of African music*. Wilhelmshaven : F. Noetzel.
- Kuria, M. (ed.) 2003. *Talking gender: conversations with Kenyan women writers*. Leeds: Peepal Tree Press.
- Lafrance, M. 2002. A cultural studies approach to women and popular music, in L. Burns and M. Lafrance (eds.): *Disruptive divas: feminism, identity & popular music*. New York: Routledge, pp. 1–30.

- Lwanda, J. (2003). Mother's songs: Male appropriation of women's music in Malawi and Southern Africa. *Journal of African Cultural Studies* 16, (2), 119–141.
- Malm K. & Wallis, R. 1984. *Big sounds from small peoples: the music industry in small countries*. York: Pendragon Press.
- Mbugua, J. 1994. *Our time has come*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Book House.
- Mensah, A. A. 1998. Compositional practices in African music. In R Stone (ed.), *The Garland encyclopedia of world music. I: Africa*. New York: Garland, 208–231.
- Mutuku, H. 2005. Henrie Mutuku. <http://henriemutuku.com> [Date of access: August 25, 2005].
- Ngesa, M. 2005. In a different light, http://geoffandwen.com/Blind/newsarticle.asp?u_id=5543 [Date of access: August 29 2005]
- Odhiambo, E. S. A. & Cohen, D. 1989. *Siaya: the historical anthropology of an African landscape*. London: James Currey.
- Oduoye, M. & Kanyoro R. 1992. *The will to arise: women, tradition, and the church in Africa*. Maryknoll : Orbis Books.
- Rycroft, D. K. 1961. The guitar improvisations of Mwenda Jean Bosco Part 1. *African Music* 2(4), 81–98.
- Rycroft, D.K. 1977. Evidence of stylistic continuity in Zulu town music. In *Essays for a humanist: an offering to Klaus Wachsmann*. Spring Valley, NY: Town House Press, 216–260.
- Sered, S. S. 1994. *Priestess, mother, sacred sister: religions dominated by women*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Stapleton, C.& May, C. 1987. *Africa all stars: The pop music of a continent*. London: Quartet Books Ltd.
- Wairimu, T: www.dacb.org/stories/kenya/wairimu_teresia.html [Date of access: August 29 2005].
- Wa Mukuna, K. 1992. The genesis of urban music in Zaire. *African Music* 7, (2), 72–84.
- Wanjuri, M: www.jiam.org. [Date of access: August 29 2005].
- Waterman, C. A. 1990. *Jùjú: A social history and ethnography of an African popular music*. Chicago, IL.: University of Chicago Press.

DISCOGRAPHY

- Mary Atieno and the IFC choir *Yesu anakupenda* – produced 1981, Producer Allan Kanyottu, mastered by Carl Andersson. Studio Sawa. Cassette recording Record Number Gospel C/02.
- IFC Choir. *Yerusalem mpya* – Produced in 1990. Produced and mastered by Allan Kanyottu. Studio Sawa, cassette recording record number gospel/C/12/14.
- Mary Atieno-Ominde and Alex Ominde *Nani kama Yehova* – first produced in 1998. On cassette by Alex Ominde. CD version EHS2001.

TERMS

- Dodo** – A song-dance genre of the Luo people of Kenya and Tanzania usually accompanied by gourd or bottle-top rattles.
- Makwaya** – A term denoting Christian religious four-part (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) songs initially performed by choirs of African Inland and Lutheran denominations but spread to other congregations in Kenya, Tanzania and Congo Republic. This choral phenomenon is prevalent in East, South and Central Africa.
- Mbaqanqa** – A South African popular music that evolved from the 1950s with either a swing and a straight beat, founded on melodic riffs that interlock in various vocal and instrumental sections, based on a primary chord cyclical harmony, with vocals in call and response. Usually has bass, rhythm and lead guitars, drums, and occasionally a brass instrument – usually saxophone. Over time the music has been rejuvenated with new and electric/electronic instruments and incorporates melodic or rhythmic ideas from other African nations.
- Bubblegum** – While mainly associated with South Africa as township pop because of the lyrics drawn from African local and blended languages, this genre name has roots in disco – in beat, instrumentation, vocal patterning and form.
- Sing and Shine** – A Kenya gospel music television programme began in 1984 to promote indigenous composers and performers.

MUSIC AND CULTURAL IDENTITY AMONG KURDISH MUSICIANS IN STOCKHOLM

Andreas Engström, University of Stockholm, Sweden

ABSTRACT

Stockholm today is a multicultural city in terms of ethnic diversity. A rather open immigration policy from the 1960s on has made Stockholm a city with a large population of people with different cultural heritages. As a result of this, there is also a thriving musical scene in terms of ethnic diversity and styles. There are major “ethnic” music events, which receive extensive media coverage and attract large and diverse audiences. But there are also small concerts aimed only at a certain ethnic group as well as large concerts with artists who are famous but only for this particular group. Several record labels occasionally release music by immigrants. A few specialise in this domain and are sometimes part of a broad international network. In sum, the different musical genres and styles that “immigrated” to Sweden over the past decades are part of the broader musical life in Stockholm, while at the same time they might also be the concern of only a particular subcultural ethnic group.

PRESENTATION OF SUBJECT

I will discuss aspects on musical identity among Kurdish musicians in Stockholm. There are several reasons for choosing this particular ethnic group for a case study. The Kurds in the Stockholm area are typical for the way “minority music” is produced and consumed in Stockholm. Kurdish artists are represented at the big festivals, but at the same time their music is performed in more private environments and at small-scale concerts targeting only the Kurdish community. Kurdish music is recorded on CDs, and the networks for distribution, as well as for concert arrangements, are highly international. Several internationally famous Kurdish artists also live in Stockholm and perform in the region, but there are also less known musicians and amateurs who take part in the musical life. The Kurdish musical scene is therefore a case study that tells us something about the musical life among minority groups in Stockholm in general.

But the Kurdish music also represents a rare and particular case. Next to Germany, Sweden has the second largest Kurdish population in the world, if one excludes the countries of origin, such as Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. This is indeed important, since a lot of cultural

activities in the international Kurdish community are located in Sweden or have some kind of connection to Sweden. On the musical scene probably the two most famous Kurdish singers, Sivan Perwer and Naser Razzazi, live or have lived in Sweden. Stockholm is also the city where probably the most important record company, Stran Music, is located.

The Kurdish group is interesting for yet another reason. The political situation for the Kurds has changed dramatically over the last decade. After the Gulf war in the early 1990s, the Kurdish area in northern Iraq gained independence, something that was introduced into the general constitution of the new Iraq after the fall of Saddam Hussein. Today, Kurdistan in Iraq is a state with a parliament of its own. During the same period, discriminatory laws in Turkey and Iran have become more liberal, which together with the new situation in Iraq have helped to acknowledge the Kurds as a political and ethnic group with a culture of their own.

This new situation also had consequences for the Kurdish musicians in exile. Kurdish music is now much more international in terms of being mobile. Several of the major Kurdish artists have been able to perform their music in their country of origin, or at least in what might be considered Kurdish territory. The international network is expanding and, without over-stressing the laws of causality, parallel to this political development, the international Kurdish music and entertainment industries have taken off. In 1995 the first Kurdish satellite TV channel Med-TV started. Today there are five major channels and several of these are to a large extent devoted to music.

Kurdish pop music is going through a lot of changes and an increasing number of artists try to make it in this expanding entertainment industry. Obviously, the changing situation for the Kurds in the past decade has had a strong influence upon the Kurdish musical scene. The Kurdish artists to a large extent represent this changing situation.

My purpose is to analyse attitudes and conceptions on identity among Kurds involved in the Kurdish musical life in the Stockholm area. Dealing with cultural identity one has to be aware of the danger of essentialising, of searching for a constant in the constitution of the culture in question, and consequently in the ideas and conception about it. This is something Stuart Hall has described thoroughly. According to him identity does not simply exist; it is rather born out of a continuous interplay between circumstances of the individual and the cultural history of the group. Identity is also a process of narrating one's own life and to position oneself within the narratives of the past (Hall 1990).

Since Kurdish popular music has gone through a lot of changes in terms of new styles, genres and hybridisation within the past ten years, concepts about musical identity could very well be examined in the music. This is an important area for future research. But among most artists there also seems to be, if not a clear idea, at least a general notion about

what it means to be playing Kurdish music. Ideas about this kind of identity are a crucial area of self-recognition and therefore important for an investigation. This idea about self-recognition as a Kurdish artist is not of less importance for a younger generation, whose music is in the international popular music idiom.

My sources are mainly interviews with Kurdish musicians conducted during 1999/2000 and during the first part of 2006. I have also used secondary sources such as radio programmes and articles where the issue of Kurdish musical identity has been raised. In 1999 and early 2000 I had several interviews with immigrant musicians in Stockholm, some of them Kurds, with the purpose of mapping the musical arenas among immigrant musicians in Stockholm. I left this investigation half finished, only to pick it up again when I became part of the Music and Identity Project of SSARN. Then, I complemented my old material with new interviews. At the same time I collected data about the Kurdish musical scene in Stockholm.

Since my empirical material was collected in two sessions with a break of six years, I have been able to register certain changes in the Kurdish musical scene and in opinions about Kurdish identity. Two things struck me. One is that the musical scene of the Kurds seems to have expanded rapidly – in terms of the number of artists and musicians, and also in the way new and popular genres have become more important during the process of hybridisation during which Kurdish popular music became mixed with genres such as hip-hop and R'n'B. The other aspect is the way that the ideas about Kurdish identity in music have changed too. Even though Kurdish pop music today is sometimes very international in style, most musicians certainly have an idea about how Kurdish identity is to be defined in terms of music.

From my empirical material I have found three subjects that seem to be of some importance in the description or representation of Kurdish identity. The ideas or narratives are important for most artists, although it seems as if the way they are dealt with has changed within only a few years. The tension between “traditional” and “modern” aesthetics has been emphasised with the evolution of the new Kurdish pop style in new media formats such as the video clip. Although strong opinions about this dichotomy have been put forward, several artists consciously try to navigate between what is considered traditional and modern. It certainly shows that the awareness of tradition is as strong as ever.

EARLIER STUDIES

Several studies on Swedish immigrant music have been conducted over the last 15 years. Ronström (1990, 1992) is mainly concerned with music and identity. Hammarlund (1993) and Lundberg (1992) deal especially with music and transculturation. Since the early 1990s much has indeed changed, especially in terms of media usage and the way music

production, distribution and consumption rely on the new media. The most important and also most extensive recent study on the subcultural strata of music in Sweden is that by Lundberg, Malm, and Ronström (2000), a collection of case studies in which the interplay between music and media is crucial in the forming of subcultural identities. Several case studies in this volume deal with the music of ethnic minorities, however not with Kurdish music. Until today, no academic text has been published on Kurdish music in Sweden.

KURDISH MUSIC IN STOCKHOLM - AND IN OTHER PLACES

The majority of Kurds in Sweden live in Stockholm. This is also where the most Kurdish institutions and organisations are located. The Kurdish National Organisation is based in Stockholm and so are several smaller Kurdish associations. The National organisation as well as these associations organise a large part of the cultural activities. The Kurdish Library also plays an important part in the organisation of cultural events such as literary evenings and smaller concerts.

Stockholm, like almost every big city in Europe, is segregated, with a large population of immigrants living in the suburbs. Accordingly, Kurdish musical activities in the Stockholm area to a large extent take place in different suburb venues. Several restaurants function as medium-sized concert halls in the evenings. The artists who perform might have different ethnic backgrounds simply depending on what day it is and who hired the artist. Although it is an exaggeration to claim that the artists and the audience are ethnically homogeneous, there is a tendency that artists and audiences especially from the Middle East and Turkey share the same venues.

Kurdish musical events with an outspoken ethnic profile are organised by different Kurdish organisations or private persons. An organisation, often connected with one of the Kurdish political parties, might rent a restaurant or concert hall to arrange a concert with some internationally well-known artist. These events are often well attended, although the publicity about the events is usually transmitted through media channels such as private radio, Kurdish TV channels and on posters in Kurdish shops, using the strategies of “narrow casting” by aiming only at a certain subcultural group (Lundberg, Malm & Ronström 2000). These organisations or private persons also arrange functions. These often take place during Kurdish holidays, such as New Year. The entertainment might be performances by well known as well as amateur artists. Sometimes song competitions take place during these big parties. These kinds of special concerts attract a rather ethnically homogeneous audience.

In the last ten years, Stockholm has witnessed an increasing interest in different kinds of non-Western music, as well as in folk music in general; what in the late 1980s was lumped together as “World Music”. The best-known manifestation of this popular culture is the

large festival Re:Orient, which was started in 1993. This festival, together with other festivities that use a mixture of Oriental folk and popular music and Western folk music, has made an important contribution to the music scenes of Stockholm. At these festivals Kurdish music, which is performed only very occasionally, has an opportunity to be presented to a heterogeneous and broad Swedish audience.

Most CDs with minority music are released on the artist's own label, although some record labels occasionally produce music of this kind and there are a few labels that specialise in music from a certain ethnic group. The production is often financed by the artists themselves, although there are fairly good possibilities of having the production partly financed by the Swedish Council of Cultural Affairs. The most important record label devoted especially to immigrant music is Stran Music, located in Hallonbergen, a suburb of Stockholm. Stran Music's main focus area is Kurdish music. The catalogue ranges from pop music and more traditionally oriented contemporary artists, to the release of older classical Kurdish folk music. Usually the artists finance the recordings themselves and then use the benefits of Stran Music's good international distribution network. The record company has for several years co-operated with the Kurdish sound technician, Bejar Dilan, who has been the most important producer in Sweden of all kinds of productions from the eastern part of the Mediterranean or near-Middle East.

The diaspora is constructing the musical scene. Especially the well-known musicians, such as Perwer and Razzazi, have for a long time performed for Kurds at concerts and festivals all over Europe. Thus, the international arena for an artist is large, even if the main base is Stockholm. From the early 1990s several artists have also been able to perform in their homelands, thanks to the new situation in Iraq and the reform in other countries. The Kurdish network has expanded internationally in recent years.

TOPICS OF IDENTITY AMONG KURDISH ARTISTS IN SWEDEN

My analysis of Kurdish musical identity is based mainly on empirical collections made during two periods mentioned above. Empirical data are also derived from concerts, parties, weddings, etc., where music has played an important role. My work with the material is therefore also to be considered as a kind of fieldwork with participatory observations. From these collections of data, certain conceptions and opinions, I have crystallised the three topics of discourse presented below. In the analysis I have chosen artists and opinions that in a broad sense represent these topics. The themes, headlined below, are drawn from a rather large body of material that – in addition to the opinions from musicians themselves – also includes conversations with arrangers, journalists, officials in the Kurdish National Organisation, etc.

NATIONALISM - INTERNATIONALISM

The tension between nationalism and internationalism in Kurdish culture has a long history, also in Sweden. The probably most appreciated and famous musician, who is also a symbol of Kurdish culture and resistance against the authorities, Sivan Perwer, is a Swedish citizen. Since the late 1970s he has lived partly in Sweden, but most of the time he has been residing in Germany. Perwer's music is strongly rooted in traditional Kurdish folk music and he has made numerous recordings and performs for large audiences all over the world. His songs strongly emphasise the national liberation movement of the Kurds (Blum & Hassanpour 1996). Even in being a Swedish citizen, Perwer does not feel that he is Swedish or represents the Swedish Kurds. His personal identity is Kurdish, as a Kurd, he is in exile, and his musical partners as well as audiences are to be found worldwide.¹ The Kurdish music within the Swedish context is thus at the same time national and highly international.

Perwer has lived in Sweden only intermittently during the last 30 years, but this combined Kurdish nationalism and internationalism is also to be found in the Kurdish musical culture more strongly based within the Swedish context. The Kurdish record label, Stran Music, distribute CDs to Kurdish shops, bookstores, and organisations in Sweden and elsewhere. International record companies also use Stran Music as distributor, because of the outspoken non-political policy of the company. Stran Music is not connected to any of the international Kurdish political parties.² Several of the artists represented on Stran Music live in Sweden, and some Kurdish artists also live in other countries. In recent years the international network has been further expanded. Instrumental parts might be recorded in Kurdistan and the vocal parts in Sweden.³ The Swedish-Kurdish singer "Cudy" Adel Faka has expressed his admiration for the skills of Kurdish musicians living in Turkey, which he considers the most important area of Kurdish music.⁴

Although specialising in Kurdish music and having a reputation of being a representative of the Kurdish people, Stran Music also releases music from other nationalities and Swedish minorities with no connection to Kurdish music and culture. This international and multicultural identity is exemplified in the collaboration with the Swedish-Kurdish sound technician Bejar Dilan. Dilan has been a steady partner in many of Stran Music's productions. Artists from different parts of the world and with different ethnic origins travel to Sweden to work with Dilan in his studio in a suburb south of Stockholm (Engström 2001). The director of Stran Music, Kurdo Saeed, has described Dilan's ability to give an

¹ Interview with Perwer 2000-04-15

² Svängrum, Kurdisk musik i exil, Swedish radio, programme 2, broadcast 2005-03-09

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

“oriental feeling” to a production, something that Swedish studio musicians are often not able to do (Engström 2001). Thus, Saeed is placing Kurdish music and sound in a more general and broader cultural context, which reaches beyond the merely Kurdish style and is to be identified within the oriental music in general.

In recent years, and especially among the younger generation, being international also means reaching a wider audience, which also includes ethnic Swedes. It also means the incorporation of the technologies and experiences from the pop music culture of the West. Narîn Feqe co-operated with Kurdish as well as Swedish musicians on her first CD (Stran Music). She also hopes that in the future she will be able to attract a larger Swedish and international audience. A way of doing this is to sing some of the songs in Swedish or in English.⁵

Narîn Feqe’s recorded music consists of traditional songs, although with a modern and up-to-date sound, using synthesisers and modern studio equipment. This new kind of internationalism, which might be described as Westernisation or hybridisation, also includes conceptions about professionalism and modernity. To be “professional” is essential for Narîn Feqe. A way of achieving this is to reach beyond the Kurdish community in music making and to use the best resources available in terms of studios, graphic design for the album sleeve, photography, and the making of a video. A high level of proficiency is not possible if one remains only within the Kurdish community. Swedish musicians are often preferred, and for Narîn Feqe these musicians very often personify high quality. According to Feqe a good musician is always able to reach beyond his or her cultural borders.⁶

TRADITIONAL - NEW

The tension between traditional music and new Western-influenced popular music has increased in recent years. Already in the first half of the 1990s the artist Kawe with his first cassette tape *Step 1* was criticised by elderly musicians in Sweden for “having destroyed Kurdish music” (Blum & Hassanpour, p. 339). Kawe’s idea was “to develop and modernise and simultaneously present Kurdish music to other nationalities hoping that there will be other steps ahead”. Kawe also thought “Kurdish music has always borrowed” and that “looking for pure music doesn’t fit in today’s world” (quoted in Blum & Hassanpour, p. 339).

These ideas, too radical for some artists, have developed further during the years. An important aspect of this seems to be the fast growing development in media and music production. Today there are five relatively new Kurdish TV channels; the first, Med-TV,

⁵ Interview with Narîn Feqe 2006-03-12

⁶ Interview with Narîn Feqe 2006-03-12

started its broadcasts in 1995. They broadcast news, films and various other kinds of entertainment. Up to 80% of the time is devoted to music.

The internationalism of Kurdish culture has extended even further with the expansion of satellite TV. Kurds all over the world now receive the same information and take part in, and share similar experiences. Kurdish popular artists have traditionally built up their careers over long periods of regular performance and gradually gained an increasingly higher reputation. There are several examples of artists today in their fifties who started by learning songs from older “masters” and gradually built up their careers by giving countless live performances. Their reputation, so to speak, spread by word of mouth.

In contrast, this rather older system has over recent years been superseded by a highly modern and “Western” way of marketing strategies. A reason for this is that the conditions for Kurds to perform music have improved. The existence of the autonomous region of Kurdistan in Iraq, more liberal laws in Iran and Turkey’s aspirations to join the EU have expedited the rapid transition to hypermodernity. A performance on Kurdish TV today gives the artist a worldwide audience and an impact that might lead to immediate recognition.

Over the past year there has been an increase of Western-influenced Kurdish pop music with features of rock, hip-hop, and techno. Several Swedish Kurdish artists are critical of these new tendencies and the role TV and media plays in this. Najmadin Gholami criticises the TV channels for not taking greater responsibility in the selection of music.

“They influence many youngsters. They just broadcast. If you send a video clip to them, they will show it. They do not think about what kind of music it is or who the singer is. It is dangerous, it is not good.”⁷ The quotation indicates a clear idea of what is good and not good music. Gholami states that this is a problem for Kurdish music. “A Swedish TV channel does not broadcast just anything. They have a kind of level. Unfortunately we do not have that.”⁸

Naser Razzazi, after Perwer one of the most popular and highly esteemed Kurdish artists, who recently resettled in Iran after more than 20 years in exile in Sweden, most clearly represents this not totally unproblematic tension between the old and the new. Razzazi started singing folksongs in the Kurdish part of Iran forty years ago and is today a link to the old oral tradition of learning and preserving Kurdish music and culture. Razzazi has in recent years started to sing and record more of his own material. He is very critical towards

⁷ Svängrum, *Kurdisk musik i exil*, Swedish radio, programme 2, broadcast 2005-03-09

⁸ *Ibid.*

the rapidly growing commercialisation of Kurdish music and speaks about a “musical value that is gradually disappearing” and a music that is becoming “very sexist”.⁹

At the same time Razzazi considers himself as a traditional singer, while at the same time a representative of the new music. He claims his position in both worlds: “A lot of the musical work is taking its shape from the new culture, the new society, new values.”¹⁰ Razzazi has composed many new songs clearly influenced by, for example, techno and pop. But he is also critical of the growing influence of Arabic, Turkish, and Persian music on Kurdish music and he makes clear distinctions on the way in which music takes influences from different cultures. “It does not enrich the Kurdish culture if one takes a Persian song and translate it into Kurdish. I like to take a Kurdish song and let other music enrich it.”¹¹

Razzazi proposes a kind of middle way: “Some only believe in the old and sing only traditional songs. Then there is the MTV generation who go only for the new. I believe in something in-between. You have to keep what is your own, but still let it be modernised as the world is moving forward.”¹²

Razzazi’s somewhat ambivalent position between new and old can also be inferred from his ideas about the impossibility of getting up on stage to sing only traditional Kurdish music. “One has to mix it with new songs to meet the demand for plurality.”¹³

However, it is obvious that behind every aspect and opinion about old, new, good, and bad, there is an idea about how to keep – or at least to relate to – an important cultural heritage and something that is Kurdish. This position between old and new can be exemplified from artists in the younger generation, although this music is more within the modern popular styles. According to Narîn Feqe, a Kurd that does not begin his/her career with singing traditional songs will experience difficulties in developing his/her own musical style and personality. A Kurdish artist “has to know where he/she comes from”, Narîn Feqe says.¹⁴

BEING KURDISH AND WORKING FOR THE KURDISH PEOPLE

A Kurdish artist has a task of using the status of being a star, celebrity, or artist to do something for the Kurdish people. This is an important theme among the Kurdish artists. Sivan Perwer’s problem with the Turkish authorities started with his devotion to Kurdish

⁹ *Svängrum, Kurdisk musik i exil*, Swedish radio, programme 2, broadcast 2005-03-30

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ *Ibid.*

¹⁴ Interview with Narîn Feqe 2006-03-12

ideals, something he expressed by singing in the Kurdish language. Several of Naser Razzazi's own compositions are also on political subjects and deal with liberation and independence (Blum & Hassanpour 1996).

Narîn Feqe also sees herself as someone who has a mission to accomplish a part of a history within the family of Kurdish singers. Feqe's father and grandfather were both singers and, according to Narîn Feqe, her ancestors saw their singing and performing as dedicated to the Kurdish people. Narîn Feqe subsequently dedicated her first single (Stran Music) to her people; the record sleeve states: "This single is for us".

CONCLUDING DISCUSSION - NARRATING IDENTITY IN A PROCESS OF INTEGRATION AND GLOBALISATION

According to Blum and Hassanpour, "(c)onceptions of what is 'essentially Kurdish' vary accordingly to differences in working and living conditions and in response to various ideological constraints" (1996, p. 337). Blum and Hassanpour also note that conceptions of what is Kurdish have been based upon the language, the type of melody used, or some idea about "authenticism" (*ibid.*, p. 337).

Over the past 10-15 years there has been an escalating development in the production and consumption of minority music (Lundberg, Malm & Ronström 2000). New technologies, particularly the Internet, have played a crucial role in this development and in making the music more accessible to a larger audience.

In Sweden, music from foreign cultures currently occupies a much larger space in public life than it did ten to fifteen years ago. But, as in the case of the Kurds, the music is also of a special concern for the group and plays an important role *within* this subculture, where it is produced, performed and distributed. The Kurdish music from the latter part of the 1990s has started to reach beyond its own group. An example is the urge to integrate the music with Western popular music. With the rapid development of Kurdish media channels, there is a new demand for new music and artists, and with this also comes the proliferation of artists, musical styles, and visual image. This turnover generates new modes of dealing with Kurdish identity. And in general, if one glances at the newly produced video clips, there is an obvious tendency towards a Westernisation of musical production as well as visual image. This process of development and the urge to make the music more "modern" or to keep it "traditional" combines the "catalytic" and "emblematic" functions (see, for example, Hammarlund 1990). The former is exemplified in the "dedication" of the music "to the Kurdish people" in an effort to present Kurdish music to other cultures and audiences.

This change in Kurdish musical culture could be interpreted as a sign of how a musical culture is gradually losing its identity and roots. But at the same time it can be seen as a reflection of a general cultural integration within Swedish society. After all, until recently Kurdistan society could be described as an “oral society [where] songs were performed, heard and transmitted in face-to-face encounters between singers and audiences” (Blum & Hassanpour, p. 327). Sivan Perwer and Naser Razzazi started their schooling in the Kurdish musical tradition in the 1960s. Kurdish traditional music is today not an isolated subculture within the Kurdish community, but a constantly changing musical culture that is integrating with the general popular music of the time. And an interesting aspect of this is that almost every artist believes that it is very important to remain close to the Kurdish tradition. In this meeting with the new media climate, Kurdish musical culture is in the process of defining itself through a continuous negotiation with, and narration of, its own musical culture.

As the largest non-state nation in the world, with a language that has been suppressed by the authorities in different times and to differing degrees, it is no wonder that Kurdish culture has been documented to a rather small extent. The body of literature written on Kurdish music is small, and so far there has not been a serious academic study on Kurdish music in Sweden. Kurdish culture is now in the process of acknowledging its own culture, and hand in hand with this goes the process of creating or constructing it.

Being a people “without a homeland”, without a clearly distinct geographical reference to a land that could be called their own, the Kurds certainly exhibit similarities with the Assyrians, also a relatively large ethnic group in Sweden. The Assyrian process of cultural self-affirmation occurs mainly through modern media like the Internet, which work as a kind of “virtual culture”, which have a unifying effect on Assyrians worldwide (Lundberg, Malm & Ronström 2000).

Hassanpour, in his study on Kurdish nationalism and language, has claimed that the formation of a “reading public” requires a standardisation of a language, which in turn might stimulate further language reforms (Hassanpour 1992). Music is another type of language, though it does not always favour standardisation, and this might also not be the desire of the listening public. Instead one might say that it works in the opposite way; the more it is produced and exposed, the more it goes against standardisation. Kurdish popular music is only at the beginning of a new age in which it will develop into further hybrids with other popular musical styles. And hand in hand with these, new ideas about what constitutes “Kurdishness” will develop. The global culture, transmitted through the media, might have a fragmenting and dislocating effect on Kurdish self-identity, while at the same time it creates conditions for a continuous process of self-definition and narrated negotiation.

REFERENCES

- Blum, S. & Hassanpour, A. 1996. "The morning of freedom rose up': Kurdish popular song and the exigencies of cultural survival", *Popular Music* XV/3, pp. 325-43.
- Engström, A. 2001. "Stran Music", *Lira Musikmagasin*.
- Hall, S. 1990. *New times: the changing face of politics in the 1990s*, London: Lawrence and Wishart.
- Hammarlund, A. 1990. "Från Gudstjänarnas berg till folkets hus, etnicitet, nationalism och musik bland assyrier/syrianer", in Ronström 1990.
- Hammarlund, A. 1993. *Yeni Sesler - Nya stämmor : en väg till musiken i det turkiska Sverige*, Stockholms Universitet: Department of Musicology.
- Hassanpour, A. 1992. *Nationalism and language in Kurdistan 1918-1985*, San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press.
- Lundberg, D. 1992. *Persikoträdgårdarnas musik : en studie av modal improvisation i turkisk folk- och populärmusik baserad på improvisationer av Ziya Aytekin*. Doctoral dissertation, Stockholm University: Department of Musicology.
- Lundberg, D, Malm, K. & Ronström, O. 2000. *Musik, medier, mångkultur : förändringar i svenska Musiklandskap*. Hedemora: Gidlund.
- Ronström, O. 1992. *Att gestalta ett ursprung : en musiketnologisk studie av dansande och musicerande bland jugoslaver i Stockholm*. Doctoral dissertation, Stockholm University: Department of Musicology.
- Ronström, O. (red). 1990. *Musik och Kultur*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.

OTHER SOURCES

- Svängrum, Kurdisk musik i exil*, Swedish Radio, Programme 2, broadcast 2005-03-09 and 2005-03-30
- Interview with Sivan Perwer 2000-04-15
- Interview with Narin Feqe 2006-03-12

THE COLONIAL INFLUENCE ON MUSIC EDUCATION IN GHANA AND SOUTH AFRICA

*Eric Akrofi, Walter Sisulu University, South Africa
James Flolu, University of Education, Winneba, Ghana*

ABSTRACT

The current education system in most African countries was inherited from Western European countries through the combined activities of Christian missionaries, merchants and colonial governments. The authors of this essay contend that the legacy of colonialism in Africa – specifically in the case of Ghana and South Africa – survives in British systems like staff notation, tonic sol-fa and Western tonal-functional harmony despite decades of post-independence educational transformation. We argue further that colonial legacies like external music examinations, the playing of Western musical instruments, ballroom dancing, choirs and bands have been entrenched in Ghanaian and South African music education, resulting in the creation of vibrant music genres and cultures to service the musical identities of people in both countries. Finally, we propose that current Western-based music education should be placed on an equal footing with well-planned Africa-oriented and multicultural music education programmes in both countries.

INTRODUCTION

The education system in most African countries was inherited from Western European countries through the combined activities of Christian missions, merchants and colonial governments. This colonial legacy has been found to be inadequate in fulfilling the educational needs of the continent (see, for example, Ayandele 1966; Boahen 1966; Flolu 1993; Akrofi 1998). Since the middle of the 20th century reforms have been launched at various times in almost all African countries as part of an effort to establish education systems that connect best with the philosophical traditions and indigenous cultural practices of the various countries. It is illuminating to note that there is a common set of themes that guide the process of educational reconstruction in nearly all African countries south of the Sahara. Dominant among these themes are: cultural alienation and cultural revival, the search for the lost African personality, and the need for a national identity. Music education has been part of this process.

However, music educators involved in this process are continually confronted with such questions as “Why is Western music in favour? Why are staff notation and examination predominant? Why is traditional African music marginalised, yet honoured?” (Thorsén 2004, p. 181). Although they agree that present Western-oriented music education programmes need to be transformed, music educators’ efforts in this regard are obstructed by their conservative philosophical pride in Western scholarship coupled with the fear of their not being uniform with the education systems of other countries. No African country south of the Sahara can boast of a music education system which is uniquely African and which fulfils its national aspirations. It would appear that this difficulty stems from the lack of knowledge and understanding of the real effects of Western influence on music education in Africa.

THE COLONIAL EXPERIENCE

Western Europe’s initial contacts with Africa occurred six centuries ago through the activities of explorers, Christian missionaries and merchants. Africa was a continent where European countries variously tested their racial superiority, military and political power, trade expansion abilities and evangelistic capacities. These activities eventually paved the way for Western colonial domination. By the beginning of the 20th century all of Africa had come under different European powers. Whereas in some parts, such as West Africa, Western European occupation took the form of temporary colonial rule, in others, such as in Southern Africa, it took the form of settler colonialism.

Until it gained independence in 1957, Ghana was a British colony. The first President of post-independence Ghana, Dr Kwame Nkrumah, a notable Pan-Africanist, introduced policies not only to consolidate political independence, but also to ensure total cultural emancipation. Guided by the philosophy of *sankofa* (word which means “retrieve” in Twi, a Ghanaian language), all public, social, political and educational institutions began to witness reforms aimed at retrieving their African culture, lost under colonialism. As a strong activist for the retrieval of an African personality, Dr Kwame Nkrumah’s political ideas and strategies for the struggle against colonial rule became models for independence fighters in other African countries. As the first sub-Saharan African country to gain independence from Western colonial domination, Ghana took the lead in the 1950s and 1960s in reforming its political and educational systems. With regard to South Africa, European settlers of Dutch descent took over the country in 1948 from British colonial rule and enforced apartheid, a system of European/white supremacy rule, which finally ended in 1994. Thus, South Africa, being the last African country to gain independence from colonial rule, has only recently had the opportunity to put into practice the transformation of its political and education systems to suit its emerging needs. However, whereas Ghana aimed

at an African-oriented transformation for its “purely” African population, South Africa, in view of its multiracial society, opted for non-racial, non-sexist and multicultural transformation.

Western colonial occupation of Africa has been condemned in many writings on Africa. When scholars talk of the Western impact on African culture and education, the twin agents referred to are Christian missions and colonial administration. Exploration of Africa by Europeans has earned a good name. Tourism and merchant activities are now referred to as world trade and foreign investment. These two are regarded as business enterprises and are even sought after by African governments. Christianity has also attracted a lot of African converts and Christian worship has become a widely acceptable practice in Africa. As such, there are very few or hardly any African people who advocate its abolition, although some believe Christian worship should be more African-oriented than is the case at present. Western formal education and schooling, which are prevalent in almost all countries in sub-Saharan Africa, have been based on Christian and colonial values.

EUROPEAN INFLUENCE ON MUSIC EDUCATION IN GHANA AND SOUTH AFRICA

Formal music education in Ghana and South Africa was started by Christian missionaries who emphasised the singing of hymns to attract African converts to church worship and to Christianity. Missions were also established for the training of priests, catechists and other church officials. The music curricula of such missions included, apart from the singing of hymns and songs, the teaching and learning of the rudiments of Western music theory, especially staff notation and tonic sol-fa, as well as the playing of Western instruments such as the piano, harmonium and organ.

In Ghana the Presbyterian Training College and Seminary, Akropong, established by the Basel Mission in 1848, is acknowledged as producing some of Ghana’s first generation of music teachers and composers of choral music such as Otto Boateng, Ephraim Amu and J. H. Kwabena Nketia. A similar institution in South Africa is Lovedale College, established in 1820 at Alice in the Eastern Cape Province, where South Africa’s first generation of black composers of choral music such as John Bokwe, Enoch Sontonga and Benjamin Tyamzashe were educated.

Scholars such as Agawu (2003) and Nzewi (1999) have criticised the colonial influence of music education for its negative effect on African music. However, the authors of this essay contend that the colonial influence has not necessarily been detrimental, but has had some positive effects on music education in both Ghana and South Africa today. Ghanaian and South African nationals have adapted Western systems such as staff notation, tonic sol-fa, as well as tonal-functional harmony, counterpoint and musical forms, and employed these

to create new genres and musical cultures that are recognised as African. For example, the combination of the Western systems with indigenous African idioms and rhythms has led to the evolution of an African style of art music composition, especially in choral music, which is variously referred to as “Western-derived African music”, “hybridised” or “syncretic music” (Flolu 2004, p. 169).

In South Africa the tonic sol-fa system has been used for over a century and a half as the principal means of choral music composition and practice especially among black communities. This is confirmed by Stevens and Akrofi (2004, p. 311), who observe that in South Africa tonic sol-fa has clearly become “an integral part of the musical culture of the indigenous community and, as such the method and its notation ... have continued to play a significant role in both maintaining and promoting choral music as an important aspect of the national psyche”. However, in Ghana tonic sol-fa is not as widely used in choral composition and practice as happens in South Africa. This may be attributed to the introduction of new music curricula in the 1970s that emphasised the teaching and learning of staff notation.

The love for and interest in singing are manifest in regular church choir rallies and competitions that are organised by the various churches at both local and national levels. Choral music is regarded as a very important medium of music education in Ghana and South Africa. Although choral music styles in both countries have developed largely through Christian church activities, today their enjoyment transcends worship ceremonies. Numerous choral groups are emerging at work places and in cities, towns and villages. South Africa, compared to Ghana, has a richer and more vibrant choral music culture. For example, the *Ladysmith Black Mambazo* group, at present South Africa’s most internationally known choral group, performs *isicathamiya* (an a cappella male, urban musical form), which is the best known popular choral music form in South Africa today. *Isicathamiya* is influenced by Western hymnody, especially its four-part SATB singing style. Also choral competitions, among black choirs, sponsored by business organisations such as Pick ‘n Pay, Caltex, Telkom and Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, abound in South Africa. South Africa’s vibrant choral music culture is described by van Wyk (1998, p. 23) as being “without any doubt the most popular and populous musical endeavour in South Africa at the present time, and most especially amongst the black communities.” The repertoire of such choirs includes works by African composers and Western classical composers such as Handel, Bach, Mozart, Brahms and Mendelssohn.

Choral competitions in Ghana are usually organised by churches, other religious organisations and schools, but such competitions are not held as regularly and/or on such a grand scale as is the case in South Africa.

Highlife is regarded as Ghana's main home-grown popular music style that has been influenced by Western musical elements and idioms. It evolved around the 1920s with the creative and innovative blend of indigenous popular musics such as *Osibi*, *Ompe Adakam* with foreign, especially Western, musical ideas. Blending these with local indigenous idioms, highlife music has continued to borrow extensively from Western classical music, hymns and other Christian songs to attain its present fame and popularity. Since its beginnings highlife has had to face several challenges, especially with regard to its continuous foreign influence. Although its national features can still be heard, various forms of Western popular music have found their way into the Ghanaian highlife, creating several varieties such as funk highlife, reggae highlife and gospel highlife. Although evolved from Christian worship, gospel music has also become a variety of highlife enjoyed by both Christians and non-Christians. In the last decade a new form, *hiplife*, has emerged combining the local highlife elements with African-American rap style.

Similarly in South Africa, popular styles such as *mbaqanqa*, and *maskanda* emerged with the use of local songs and rhythms accompanied with Western instruments, especially the bass guitar, keyboard and concertina in the case of *maskanda*. The instrumental sections were often based on simple (primary) chord progressions of I–IV–V–I, also an important feature in Ghanaian highlife. The *kwaito* of South Africa is similar to the hiplife of Ghana in the sense that it combines a local black language and musical elements with African-American rap. All these locally grown musical genres have become distinct popular forms that are enjoyed nationwide.

Western or colonial influence has not been limited to the art and popular music of Africa. Various forms of indigenous African music have also been influenced by Western traits, leading to the creation of new forms and the enrichment of existing ones. An example from Ghana is the *boboobo* of the northern Ewe in the Volta region that has grown out of *Dedeleme*, *Totoeme*, *Gumbe* and *Asiko*. In its formative years in the late 1940s the *boboobo* adapted the Western band bass drum as the master drum and the bugle was an important instrument. Today both instruments have been replaced with the *vugã* (big Ewe drum) and trumpet respectively. The songs are not entirely like those of other Ewe dances such as *gabada* and *gbolo*. They consist of a combination of Western melodic patterns and traditional Ewe idioms. Christian songs, mainly hymns, have been used in *Boboobo* performances in Christian worship in parts of the Volta region of Ghana. Similarly, among the Akan of Ghana, *asafo* (warrior group) music is usually accompanied by the bugle and the waving of the British Union Jack flag, which they might have picked up from the British colonial military that fought several wars against the Asante (a dominant Akan ethnic group) during the colonial period.

Western whistles (of the type used by referees) have found their way into performances of indigenous South African dances such as *umxhentso* and *indlam* of the Xhosa people. In *toyi-toyi*, a combination of traditional poetry (*izibongo*), music and dance, which has virtually become a national performing art associated with protests and strikes in South Africa, participants use any Western instruments that they can lay their hands on such as whistles, drums and Western types of *vuvuzela* (local cow horn) made of plastic.

The current use of Western instruments in performances of indigenous African musical types in both Ghana and South Africa shows the extent to which the colonial influence on African music has been embraced by the people of both countries.

EDUCATIONAL CONSOLIDATION

The classroom is a unifying institution; it brings together children from different ethnic groups in Ghana (and in South Africa, children of different races). It is therefore in the classroom that the diversity of learners can be assimilated into a multi-ethnic or multicultural programme.

With regard to educational reforms, there is always a common vision to create a peaceful country of one nation and one people from the existing different ethnic groups and diverse cultures. It is thought that by creating a proper national cultural identity, dependence on the cultures of the former colonial masters can be limited. A system of education that will make the various ethnic groups accept and tolerate one another's diversity is what is being sought in both Ghana and South Africa.

This desire underpinned the educational reforms initiated in Ghana in the 1980s. Although the government recognised the need for every Ghanaian to have a sense of cultural identity and dignity, there is still need for an education system that will promote a unified Ghanaian culture, ensure a sense of national identity and develop good citizenship in the people to enable them to participate effectively in the national democratic development. The government believes that such an education system will make the nation stronger, more unified and better able to resist foreign influence and domination (Ministry of Education 1988, p. 3).

Similarly, in preparing a new agenda of lifelong general education and training for South Africa, the National Curriculum Development Committee (NCDC) was guided by the vision of the government to make South Africa a "truly united, democratic and internationally competitive country with literate, creative and critical citizens, leading productive, self-fulfilled lives in a country free of violence, discrimination and prejudice" (NCDC 1996, p. 5). Clearly the NCDC takes into account the multicultural and multiracial

nature of South African society and is also guided by the need to develop a social system that will reintegrate the various races and cultures of South Africa into a unified nation.

TOWARDS AN AFRICA-ORIENTED AND MULTICULTURAL MUSIC EDUCATION SYSTEM

The major challenge facing African countries is not how to get rid of Western formal schooling, but rather how to make it serve their interests better. Thus, there is concern about how to use the Western formal education system to restore the indigenous cultures and strengthen them so as to cope with the technological developments of today's global world, as well as serve the emerging needs of the various countries. African countries are also confronted with the problem of how to retrieve and restore their history, cultural heritage and national identity. In this regard, the arts (especially music) appear to be one of the major means of addressing this problem.

In both Ghana and South Africa post-independence governments have issued various documents to guide reforms not only in arts and culture education and training, but also in the overall national development agenda. In Ghana two policy documents issued in the 1980s deserve particular mention. First is the Cultural Policy of Ghana, which, among other things, is designed to “retrieve and restore our history and our heritage in order to protect them and project them for posterity; to support the educational system by ensuring the stimulation of creativity and effective reference to our traditional values, as well as promote creativity in the fields of arts, science and technology . . . [and] ensure the continuity of traditional skills and sports and their progressive updating to serve modern development needs as Ghana's contribution to world culture”. The Policy gives attention to the promotion and preservation of all forms of arts and crafts – literary, performing, visual, sculpture, painting, film and so on (National Commission on Culture, Cultural Policy of Ghana, pp. 3–5). The second is the Curriculum Enrichment Programme of the Ministry of Education, which echoes the basic tenets of the Cultural Policy of Ghana and is intended to encourage both the study and adaptation of relevant traditional practices in schools. These documents were designed to influence subsequent curriculum innovation in music education aimed at making indigenous Ghanaian music part and parcel of the school curriculum. As a result, two radical reforms have been introduced into the school music programme. They are the *Cultural Studies Syllabus* (CRDD, 1987) and the *Music and Dance Syllabus* (Ghana Education Service, 1998), both of which provide guidelines for the teaching and learning of the performing arts of Ghana.

However, for the last two decades or so all the major reforms introduced with regard to music education in Ghana have been met with condemnation and perhaps even resistance from professional music teachers because of the seemingly low status given to the teaching

of the rudiments and theory of Western classical music in the new syllabuses. Whereas policy makers strongly believe the revisions will help to achieve the nation's objective of cultural restoration and promote creative development among young children, professional music teachers think the academic essence of schooling is being trivialised (see Flolu 1993, 1998).

It appears that the above-mentioned documents, namely the Cultural Policy of Ghana and the Curriculum Enrichment Programme are now history. They are no longer used as reference points in the arguments surrounding the problems associated with the new syllabuses. Most teachers seem not to have read them and there has been no forum to assess their validity and relevance to present-day aspirations of the country.

In present-day Ghana very few empirical studies have been conducted on the impact of the reforms on current school music programmes. Ampia's (2004) study, recently completed in Canada, is not yet available to the Ghanaian readership. Other publications dealing with Ghanaian music education, such as Akrofi (2002) and Flolu (2004), are not easy to come by. Akrofi discusses a major challenge that Ghanaian music educators face, namely the division within the music education profession, with one group supporting the government's prescription of Ghanaian/African music as the basis of school music education and another group determined to keep Western music in the limelight. He warns, "music education in Ghana will not move forward if the personalities responsible for its development are at loggerheads" (Akrofi 2002, p. 502). Flolu (2004) observes that singing continues to remain the basic musical activity in primary schools, whereas secondary school music still focuses on the rudiments and theory of Western classical music. He adds that music teacher education still continues to be influenced by the early Christian mission's objective of training church musicians at the expense of classroom music teacher preparation.

As pointed out earlier, after the demise of apartheid the South African government launched a number of policy documents designed to address the cultural imbalances between Western music and the indigenous knowledge systems of South Africa. Three such documents that deserve particular mention are: Arts and Culture Education and Training (Department of Education, 1997), the Reconstruction and Development Programme (South Africa, 1994) and Curriculum 2005 (Department of Education, Revised National Curriculum Statement). Arts and Culture Education and Training is part of the general education reform process developed to correct the bias in the psyche of the people as a result of the colonial/apartheid experience. Like the Cultural Policy of Ghana, this document takes the position that arts and culture are integral to life and therefore are fundamental in all learning areas. Arts and culture must therefore be regarded as the engine for promoting creative growth among learners and preparing them to participate effectively in the socio-cultural and political activities of a multiracial South Africa.

The Reconstruction and Development Programme and Curriculum 2005 also devote much attention to education in the arts. The Arts and Culture components of these documents stress the importance of including the music and culture of all South Africans in the school arts education curriculum. As is the case in Ghana, these important documents are not available to a majority of music educators in South Africa. Although some music educators have been informed about these reforms through in-service training and workshops, the effective implementation of the reforms has been elusive. Thus it is difficult to assess the impact of these reforms on music and arts education in South African schools.

In their attempts to reform music education programmes Ghanaian and South African music educators and officials of the Ministry of Education seem to have focused their attention on primary and junior secondary schools. Meanwhile very little seems to have changed in secondary and tertiary institutions in both countries. Secondary school music education in both Ghana and South Africa focuses on Western music theory, the history of music in the Baroque, Classical and Romantic periods, form and analysis, and the playing of instruments such as the piano, recorder, violin and so forth. A few interested students take the graded theory of music and/or practical examinations of boards such as the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (ABRSM), Trinity College of Music or UNISA [in South Africa](see Akrofi 2002, p. 499).

Students wishing to study music in universities in both Ghana and South Africa are required to have passed theory of music examinations by any of the above-mentioned examining boards before they enter their first year. At the University of Education, Winneba (UEW) Ghana, for example, the admission requirements for music students is a pass in Music at the Senior Secondary School Certificate Examination (SSCE) level at a grade not lower than D or a pass at Grade V level in the Theory examination of the ABRSM. At Walter Sisulu University (WSU), South Africa, a pass at Grade V level in the Theory examination of ABRSM, Trinity College or UNISA is a requirement for admission. In both institutions, however, this requirement is waived for potential students who may be admitted on condition that they pass special entrance examinations.

So much importance is attached to the teaching and learning of Western music in Ghanaian and South African primary and secondary schools that the serious study of other types of music, especially African music, takes place only in the universities. This in effect means that the transformation of music education can only succeed if the study of music other than Western music is seriously encouraged in pre-tertiary institutions in both countries.

INTERNATIONAL DIALOGUE AND SUPPORT

After the demise of the apartheid regime in South Africa, the International Society for Music Education (ISME) Board of Directors set up a special team made up of six eminent scholars in music and music education. The team, known as the ISME Focus on Africa Group (FAG), was tasked with the responsibility of advising and assisting the organisers of the 23rd World Conference which was to be held in South Africa in July 1998 and to ensure that Africa and in particular South Africa would participate actively in the international discussions. Based on the recognition that the agenda for a rewarding dialogue between African music educators and the international community would have to be initiated by African music educators themselves, the FAG organised a gathering of African music educators (largely selected from South Africa) in Durban in 1997. The meeting was funded by the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA). The main purpose of the Durban gathering was to identify specific challenges in music education in the new South Africa and develop strategic projects to meet those challenges. After a four-day meeting the gathering identified the following major areas of challenge:

- ❖ Human resource development with an emphasis on teacher preparation;
- ❖ Curriculum development and implementation;
- ❖ Physical resource development and research; and
- ❖ Status building and media exposure.

On the basis of these areas, the gathering also defined eleven projects which were to be immediately pursued and the results presented at the 23rd World Conference in Pretoria. Since 1997 SIDA has been sponsoring around 10 music projects in South Africa to improve the overall quality of music education. These projects have impacted positively on music education in the country in many ways including:

- ❖ Enhancing democracy through broad participation in music;
- ❖ Celebrating the culture of the disadvantaged;
- ❖ Developing local capacity and infrastructure;
- ❖ Developing quality materials and curricula for music education;
- ❖ Extending the provision of music education to teachers through in-service training;
- ❖ Generating innovative music pedagogy.

According to Nkabinde (2004, p. 61), though the projects have received substantial funding from the Swedish government together with technical assistance from the staff of the University of Gothenburg School of Music in Sweden, it has not been easy for South African organisations to successfully promote music education as proposed by the FAG.

Ghana has not been as fortunate as South Africa in terms of international financial support for music education. So far the International Centre for African Music and Dance (ICAMD) is the only internationally funded body involved in advising music educators in Ghana. Since the 1990s ICAMD has organised at least three workshops/conferences on music and dance education in Africa, all geared towards encouraging dialogue and cooperation among music educators in many areas including the definition of a new philosophy of music education in Africa; development of new curricula and new methodologies; the training of teachers; and research. However, very few classroom music teachers were involved in these workshops. Furthermore, no platform was created for these participants to share knowledge and experience with their colleagues who are classroom teachers. At present ICAMD has weak links with music education institutions within and outside Ghana, and its influence on African music and dance education research and teaching in Ghana appears to be diminishing as little is heard about it these days.

WHICH WAY?

As we pursue music education reforms in our various African countries, we need to find out what is going on in other countries with similar problems and agendas. Yet as pointed out elsewhere, African countries continue to limit their relationship with the world to Europe and the USA. This has led us to neglect the contribution that the music and musicians of other African countries could make to the development of music education in Ghana, and indeed in individual African countries (Flolu, 2002).

Ghanaian and South African music educators have together played a major role in the formation of the Pan African Society for Music Education (PASME), launched in Harare, Zimbabwe in 2000. The music educators who participated in the 23rd World Conference (ISME), held in Pretoria in 1998, mooted the idea leading to the formation of PASME. A South African and a Ghanaian were the first President and Secretary General respectively of the society. South Africa, in particular, has continued to play a significant role in sustaining the society, including the provision of financial support for conferences and also housing the Secretariat.

In 2001 at the Lusaka Conference participants adopted a new name, Pan African Society for Musical Arts Education (PASMAE) to reflect our aspirations. PASMAE's main task is to promote music education in Africa through various activities including:

- ❖ advancing the research, study and understanding of African music;
- ❖ assisting music educators in Africa in the preservation and teaching of knowledge of the music cultures of African societies which will enable intercultural respect, understanding and cooperation;

- ❖ acting as a clearing house for music education in Africa;
- ❖ developing creative and capable modern musicians who will promote knowledge about the content, practice and meaning of African music in the contemporary world.

However, how to reverse the predominance or alienating effect of Western music in the educational curriculum remains a challenge for African music educators. Indeed PASMAE has the potential of helping music educators in Africa towards a better understanding of the problems involved in developing new music education programmes based on the collective vision of their music and arts specialists and educators. This vision is not about choosing between indigenous African music and Western music. Rather, it is about making bold but thoughtful choices in selecting the best from the available systems, both local and foreign, to create new systems which have meaning for, and are acceptable to, the society we live in. These systems must be evolved by Africans themselves, generated from within Africa and be oriented in the light of both African thought systems and the African attitude to, and practice of, music and the musical arts.

CONCLUSION

It is evident from the foregoing that Ghana and South Africa have in common a genuine desire to transform their music education programmes in such a way that their own musics and cultures do not play second fiddle to the Western music bequeathed by their former colonial rulers. This is not going to be an easy task, because in both countries the gap between political initiatives and documents, on one hand, and curriculum innovation and implementation, on the other, is still very wide and needs to be bridged. Clearly music educators and classroom teachers are the main agents of change and if they do not see the need, or are not adequately prepared for change, then the proponents of change are wasting their time.

The need to make children experience and understand fully the rich musical and cultural heritage of their traditions remains far from being realised. Yet this is necessary for a positive attitude to the music of other cultures. The absence of a systematic and critical investigation into the developmental innovations and their outcomes on music education in both countries clearly obstructs their efforts at generating a focused and meaningful curriculum-renewal process.

Clearly there is a need for an African identity as our contribution to the global intellectual community. It is important to note that the way of achieving a national cultural identity through music cannot be limited to the teaching of only indigenous forms. We are now confronted with many musical challenges drawn from the contemporary developments in

popular music, choral music, church music, art music and so on. All these now determine our identity and, therefore, should be reflected in the music education curriculum.

There is limited understanding of the real effects (positive or negative) of Africa's five or so centuries of contact with Europe (see, for example, Mackenzie 1993). Moreover, there has been very little or no systematic study of the impact of the changes and pedagogical initiatives introduced into music education in both Ghana and South Africa over the years. There is now a clear need for research into the real obstacles facing music educators in Africa and the complexities of reconstructing the music curriculum.

The conclusions drawn in this essay cannot be said to be limited to only Ghana and South Africa. They can be applied to other independent African countries with similar historical and cultural backgrounds. Obviously for Africans to develop a better grasp of the challenges involved in transforming the music curriculum and attaining a national identity, an in-depth study of the heritage from which school music education in Africa has emerged is necessary.

Music educators in Ghana and South Africa need

- ❖ a reorientation and new knowledge in how to handle African music materials with confidence and enthusiasm;
- ❖ greater insight into the real effects of Western colonialism;
- ❖ greater and closer cooperation in dealing with the problems of charting a new path for music education in Africa.

There is need for a sustained dialogue between government and educational policy makers, on the one hand, and curriculum developers and implementers, on the other. In this way it will be easier to develop a music education system which will foster in children inquiring and critical thinking abilities, reduce discrimination, promote national unity and identity, and develop among learners self-reliance, self-confidence and pride in their national cultural heritage. Both Ghana and South Africa need to engage in collaborative activities and projects, and to share and exchange views, knowledge and experience in order to enrich the music education system of our respective countries.

REFERENCES

- Agawu, K. 2003. *Representing African music: Postcolonial notes, queries, positions*. New York: Routledge.
- Akrofi, E. 1998. Traditional African music education in Ghana and South Africa. *Legon Journal of the Humanities*. Legon: University of Ghana Faculty of Arts, 11, pp. 38-47.
- Akrofi, E. 2002. The teaching of music in Africa. *Prospects*, 32 (4), pp. 491-504.

- Ampiaiw, W. K. 2004. *Suggestions for teaching music in the Ghanaian Junior secondary school cultural studies curriculum*. Unpublished MMus thesis, Brandon University.
- Ayandele, E. A. 1966. *The missionary impact on modern Nigeria: 1842–1914*. London: Longmans, Green & Company.
- Boahen, A. 1966. *Topics in West African history*. London: Longmans, Green and Company.
- CRDD, 1987. *Suggested cultural studies syllabus for junior secondary schools (1–3 Years)*. Accra: Ministry of Education.
- Department of Education. 1997. Arts and Culture learning area.
<http://www.education.gov.za/Curriculum/GET/doc/GETArtsandCulture.pdf> [Date of access: 23 May 2007]
- Department of Education. Curriculum 2005, Revised National Curriculum Statement.
http://www.mml.co.za/revised_national_curriculum_statement.htm [Date of access: 23 May 2007]
- Flolu, J. 2004. Music teacher education in Ghana: Training for the churches or for the schools? In S-M Thorsén 2004 (ed.), *Sounds of change: Social and political features of music in Africa*. Stockholm: Sida Studies 1, pp. 164–179.
- Flolu, J. 2002. African music in the secondary school curriculum. *African Music Educator*, No.12 University of Cape Coast, Department of Music, pp. 25–31.
- Flolu, J. 1998. In Search of an African and relevance oriented music education system for Ghanaian schools. Proceedings of the 23rd International Society of Music Education World Conference Pretoria: ISME, pp. 183–190.
- Flolu, J. 1993. A Dilemma for music education in Ghana. *British journal of music education*, 10, pp. 111–121.
- Ghana Education Service. 1998. *Draft teaching syllabus for music and dance, basic stages 1-9*. Accra: Ministry of Education.
- Mackenzie, C. G. 1993. Demythologising the missionaries: A reassessment of the functions and relationships of Christian missionary education under Colonialism. *Comparative Education*, 29 (1), pp. 45–63.
- Ministry of Education, 1985. *Curriculum enrichment programme (CEP)*. Accra.
- Ministry of Education, 1988. *The educational reforms programme: Policy guidelines on basic education*. Accra.
- Nzewi, M. 1999. Strategies for music education in Africa: Towards a meaningful progression from tradition to modern. *International journal of music education* 33, 72–87.
- National Commission on Culture. N.d. *Cultural Policy of Ghana*.
- Nkabinde, T. 2004. *The social, economic, educational, political and religious roles of music in South Africa with special reference to selected SABC music programmes*. Unpublished PhD Thesis, University of Pretoria.
- NCDC, 1996. *A lifelong learning development framework for general and further education and training in South Africa*. Department of Education.
- South Africa. 1994. *Reconstruction and Development Programme*. Johannesburg: Umanyano Publications.

- Stevens, R. and Akrofi, E. 2004. Tonic sol-fa in South Africa: A case study of endogenous musical practice. Proceedings of the XXVIth annual conference of the Australian Association for Research in Music Education, 25–28 September, pp. 301–314.
- Thorsén, S-M. 2004. Swedish missionaries' image of music in Africa. In S-M Thorsén (ed.): *Sounds of change: Social and political features of music in Africa*. Stockholm: Sida Studies No. 12, 164-179.
- Van Wyk, C. 1998. Choral singing in South Africa. *The South African music teacher*, 132, 23.



MUSIC AND DISCOURSE

TRAVESTY OR PROPHECY? VIEWS OF SOUTH AFRICAN BLACK CHORAL COMPOSITION

Christine Lucia

ABSTRACT

This chapter uses the example of African choral music in South Africa to show how differently the anthropological view of music in society and the musicological view of music as autonomous object can affect the way South African black music is perceived. This is especially the case in analytical approaches to an African musical tradition that apply norms of music theory and modernity associated with Western music and its analytical traditions. Four musical examples are discussed, through which the possibility for different readings are presented, and the chapter ends by proposing another kind of analytical reading, one that accepts a new African identity in the making of 20th-century choral music.

INTRODUCTION

In *Ethnicity, identity and music*, Martin Stokes notes a tension between the anthropological view of music in society and the musicological view of music as autonomous object that permeated the 20th century (1994, pp. 1–3). It nurtured differing views of music and identity that changed, as Stokes points out, according to where you stood. In this essay I consider South African black choral music in light of this tension, seeing it as “composition” forging a new African identity and noting Veit Erlmann’s caution about the “futility of bringing plain structural approaches to bear” on such music (1991, p. 120), but trying to understand why it continues to be seen in either a social-functionalist way as a field for ethnomusicology, or as “art music”. As Martin Scherzinger suggests, in his (2001) critique of the “form versus function” argument that generates the very disciplinary tension Stokes points to, there are dangers inherent in taking an “either-or” perspective on any kind of music; more especially this is the case in music that draws strongly on both western and African traditions, as black South African choral music does.

African choral music as a field of study has not been neglected (see for example Hansen 1968, Huskisson 1969, Mngoma 1981, Mthethwa 1988, Erlmann 1991, Mugovhani 1998,

Detterbeck 2003, and Olwage 2002, 2003, and 2006), and the way it has been viewed varies under different disciplinary imperatives. In Erlmann and Mughovani's work the methodological perspective is ethnomusicological, in Detterbeck's this is combined with action research, while Olwage's work is postcolonial musicology. Under a different kind of imperative, the post-apartheid ideology of nation-building, South Africans are now exhorted to regard it as African art music, or "Serious music in an African context", as Mzilikazi Khumalo puts it (2005, p. 13), distancing it from both the "traditional" and the "popular" (*ibid.*).

In this essay I focus on (mis)understandings of form, language and syntax that arise in formalist discourses on African choral music. The view Erlmann condemned above as "motivated by racial prejudice" (*ibid.*) still seems to prevail in post-apartheid South Africa, I suggest, if the continued marginalisation of choral music in the academy and classroom is anything to go by. This attitude stems from a philosophy of music education that still inculcates – through music curricula, policies, and the banning of choral music to the margins of extramural time – a particular view of European compositional identity as mainstream. I explore two compositions by black composers and two by white composers in the quest to reveal resultant disjunctures in the way choral music is read. My search begins in the archive.

QUALIFICATIONS AS MEASURE OF IDENTITY

Amongst the papers housed in the Kirby Collection of the University of Cape Town,¹ is a circular dated 3 August 1965, sent from the Johannesburg-based Institute for the Study of Man in Africa to all its members. It reads:

The Institute for the Study of Man in Africa is pleased to announce that Mr Khabi Mngoma, U.T.L.M., U.P.L.M., L.R.S.M. (Teaching), L.R.S.M. (Performance), A.T.C.L., who was born in Johannesburg and who is of Zulu extraction but completely detribalised, has kindly agreed to lecture on "The Role of Music in Soweto" (Kirby Papers, UCT).

The impression this gives is of someone brought up with tribal ways shed through the civilising process of Western education; knowledgeable enough about music in "his"

¹ Percival Kirby was a major figure in African music scholarship, and Professor of Music at the University of the Witwatersrand from 1921 to 1952 where *inter alia* he taught composition. Trained at the Royal College of Music (majoring in composition: see Kirby 1967a, 39–44, 74), Kirby emigrated to South Africa in 1914, pioneered ethnographic work on "Native" traditions (Kirby 1934 and 1936), and also became interested in contemporary African music (Kirby 1967b and 1971).

society (Soweto, the black apartheid township near white Johannesburg), to give a talk on it to a predominantly white audience at the Institute. The twenty letters after Mngoma's name suggest he is qualified to do so – U.T.L.M., U.P.L.M., L.R.S.M. and A.T.C.L.² – qualifications that link South Africa to Britain through the history of colonialism.³

This history can partly be traced back to 1832 Britain, when the Sacred Philharmonic Society was formed to promote choral practice. It soon transformed “into a symbol of religious dissent as a [huge] coalition of nonconformist choirs” (Ehrlich *et al.* 2000, p. 139), and this “dissenting” choral practice used a resurrected form of medieval tonic sol-fa notation to teach predominantly working- or lower middle-class choral amateurs throughout Britain to read and sing music. In 1835 the British Committee of Council on Education recommended tonic sol-fa and class singing for state schools (Rainbow 1986, pp. 28–31), a move further consolidated by the founding of the (London) Tonic Sol-fa College in 1869, which issued elementary and advanced external certificates, and soon included South African candidates, black and white, in its sway.⁴

In a colonising context tonic sol-fa's use in black mission schools such as Lovedale became inflected with racial overtones, as Grant Olwage has pointed out (2003, Ch 3). At black teacher training colleges throughout South Africa in the 20th century only enough of it was learned in order to be able to teach basic music theory at elementary school, thus putting most musicians on a treadmill of arrested development, their formal knowledge of music “remain[ing] ‘elementary’ because their teachers’ musical training was elementary because their pupils would not require anything more than elementary music instruction” (*ibid.*, p. 75). In the Victorian musical Establishment, meanwhile, figures such as Stanford and Parry (Percival Kirby's mentors during his formative education in the UK) saw mass education in tonic sol-fa as a threat to highbrow traditions of instrumental music in staff notation (*ibid.*, p. 66), and institutions such as the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (formed 1889) were established to provide a corrective, offering qualifications by distance education all over Britain

² These denote diplomas granted externally through the University of South Africa (UTLM/UPLM), the London Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music in London (LRSM), and London's Trinity College of Music, London (LTCL).

³ Kofi Agawu (2003, 1–22) has given an overview of the colonising impact in Africa of Western musical language and education but does not include the hegemonic effect of external diplomas in the way African musicians were inculcated with Western notions of “qualifying” musically.

⁴ Robin Stevens gives an overview of the history of tonic sol-fa notation in South Africa elsewhere in this book.

(Associated Board 1890–1901), restoring piano, violin, “bel canto” voice (rather than chapel singing) and organ, as norms of musical training, transmitted (of course) in staff notation.⁵ The new external exams of the Associated Board promoted training in Western theory, harmony, and counterpoint as essential building blocks to composition in a musical culture conceived with instrumental music as primary. These exams were requested in South Africa via the University of the Cape of Good Hope as early as 1894 (*ibid.*) and indigenised by the University of South Africa in 1948 (Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music 1948; Paxinos 1994a and 1994b). The letters after Mngoma’s name, then, were not acquired at school but by a laborious process of self-study in a situation where rival institutions once offered two forms of notation to external candidates and then competed to bring “music education” to South Africans, within an overriding context of racialised imperialism. For tonic sol-fa became the predominantly “native” notation, and staff the predominately “white” one.

External diplomas were (and still are) owned by few black South Africans, probably through lack of access to private teachers and the cost of entry fees (see Lucia 2007, pp. 176–178). As a result they are invariably mentioned in the literature on black musicians (see for example Huskisson 1969 *passim*, and Ballantine 1993, pp. 33–34). They constitute the end of a series of steps known as “Grade Exams”,⁶ and few African musicians in South Africa own them, so the five sets of letters after Mngoma’s name signify something extremely unusual in the Sowetan musical world he described in 1965. In the academic world from which Kirby had retired, on the other hand, they indicated another thing altogether: aside from adequacy to enter the music profession as a private music teacher – then, as now, most teachers had diplomas not degrees – they implied readiness to pursue an undergraduate degree in music.

⁵ This was a move explicitly concerned with the perpetuation of high standards of “taste” in British musical life (see early volumes of the London-based journal the *Musical Times*), with the pre-eminence of instrumental over vocal music, and the survival of upper-, middle- and upper-class cultural values and national political hegemony.

⁶ These progressive stages of learning (Grades 1 to 8), denote a rising scale of values for “detrified” African musicians. Grade 1 is the first step – reading staff notation’s pitches and note-values; Grade 3 is a sign of mastery over the epistemology of scales and time signatures. Grade 5 indicates familiarity with keys, time signatures, note grouping, Italian expression marks, and 18th-century ornaments, and is a point beyond which most African musicians in South Africa do not proceed; Grades 6 to 8 (the advanced certificate) denote skills in elementary melody writing, harmony, counterpoint, and formal analysis. Parnassus is the Diploma, which can be taken in either teaching or performance.

MISREADING OF MUSICAL IDENTITIES

This double standard, in which one man's Parnassus is another's half-way mark, is symptomatic not only of the colonial history from which it emerged, but also, I suggest, of the tension mentioned earlier between disciplinary perspectives. As choral music in tonic sol-fa notation became automatically considered inferior to instrumental Western music composed in staff notation, so through general attitudes by white musicians to composers of choral music was this sense of inferiority preserved. This, in turn, made it more likely that an ethnomusicological perspective would be used to study choral music, and that Western musicology's formalist modes of analysis would find such music wanting.

I use four works as evidence of the disjuncture created between readings of music composed in staff notation or tonic sol-fa notation, each dependent on different notions of music and identity: two by black composers (Joshua Pulumo Mohapeloa and Michael Mosoeu Moerane), and two by Western-trained white professors of music (Percival Kirby and Hans Roosenschoon⁷). I show how the professors related to the composers, not within an anthropological paradigm where "emic" notions of composition are expressed, but from an "etic" perspective, in which knowledge of theory, harmony, and counterpoint is the qualifying trope of composition. I am aware that this may seem an ironic position, since I, too, am a white Western-trained professor of music, here assessing the extent to which other white professors of music may be missing the point of black music – and seeing that music, furthermore, from my own perspective.

I confess to being spurred on by two things: one is a question asked from the floor at a music conference in South Africa in 1997 about African choral music: "but isn't it a travesty of Western music?" The other was a comment made by a fine arts colleague to whom played a young African composer's composition, that the music sounded "postmodern". The modernisms both listeners heard choral music avoiding are those of atonal, serial or post-serial techniques of composition. What such music seems to lack, however, makes it precisely what it is. It plays with codes of 19th-, 20th-, and even some late 18th-century music, but in so doing it flaunts such music's contextual conventions and syntactical moves. In so doing it becomes not so much travesty as reimagining; and this, as I shall show later, can also be seen as having a prophetic quality.

The codes such pieces employ are drawn from a missionary schooling tradition, of which John Knox Bokwe (1855–1922) was the colonial founding father (see Olwage 2006). The vast extant repertoire of choral music has a complex, non-unitary history and

⁷ Roosenschoon is Professor at the University of Stellenbosch; Kirby was Professor at Wits.

is far from homogenous in style. It has acquired idioms from each musical discourse known to generations of composers, most of whom were/are teachers, who live(d) in diverse intercultural and interlinguistic environments. The repertoire, written in tonic sol-fa notation, comprises thousands of pieces each about five minutes long, most of it unpublished. Texts (in all eleven official South African languages) are integral to the meaning works hold for composers and their communities. Composers write their own words, adapted from church or other ritual contexts, articulating tropes of struggle and victory in everyday life (see also Agawu 1987, p. 63), and “writing” their experiences into music.⁸

The examples of African choral music I analyse here, then, are not by people struggling with a borrowed identity within a discourse of European modernity; nor are they minor composers, but towering figures in South African culture. Joshua Pulumo Mohapeloa and Michael Mosoeu Moerane were contemporaries,⁹ and the songs I have chosen here were probably both composed in the 1930s: Mohapeloa’s “*U Ea Kae?*” (“Where Are You Going?”-1935) and Moerane’s “*Barala ba Jerusalem*” (“O Daughters of Jerusalem”) which may date from later.¹⁰

“U EA KAE” BY J.P. MOHAPELOA

“*U Ea Kae*”, of which the first six bars are shown in Ex. 1, uses “traditional” material: a Sesotho corn-threshing song from the eastern mountains of Lesotho where the composer was born.¹¹ It was published in 1935 as the first song in Volume I of Mohapeloa’s *Meloli le Lithallere tsa Afrika* (“African Melodies in Decorative Counter-Display” (Huskiisson 1969, p. 161) or “... Decorative Counterpoint” (Khumalo 1998,

⁸ They often refer(red) to politically-induced hardship. Examples are Caluza’s “*iLand Act*”, composed to mark black opposition to the Native Lands Act legislation of 1913 (see Lucia 2005, pp. 172–175 and 336), Tyamzashe’s “*Zweliyaduduma*” (“The Country is Thundering”) – a metaphorical interpretation of the British Royal family’s visit in 1947, and Matyila’s “*Bawo, Thixo Somandla*” (“Father, God Omnipotent”). This was a mid-1980s protest against the apartheid state-within-a state’s Ciskei Government, quickly taken up as a protest song and later mistaken as “traditional” (see Khumalo 1998, p. 48).

⁹ Mohapeloa (1908–82) and Moerane (1909–81) are known throughout southern Africa. Almost every year a work by one or both men is prescribed in national competitions that involve millions of choralests. No white South African composer can claim this degree of exposure.

¹⁰ There is no date ascribed to this song. See also p.173.

¹¹ Lesotho is a small mountainous kingdom in southwestern Africa surrounded by South Africa; formerly called the British Protectorate of Basutoland.

p. 38)). In Huskisson's view it is a "[c]horal *arrangement* of a traditional threshing song" (1969, p. 164; my emphasis). It is impossible to know how close it was in the 1930s to a traditional rendering, but from the way it is written down and the fact that it is performed without the movements choirs use in "traditional songs", also from the fact that it only has one verse, I see it as composition rather than arrangement. Mohapeloa was in any case quite scathing of "[a]uthorities on African music [who] uphold the old type of folk song as the only sound basis for further development", advocating instead the use of "idiom[s] of the time", absorbed from musics "the African has tasted, chewed, swallowed, and assimilated till they formed part of his being" (Mohapeloa 2002(1951), [2]). This did not stop him from using traditional music, but I suggest that he did so as composer rather than arranger. According to Khumalo, the song's popularity in its place of origin is such, nevertheless, that it is now known principally in Mohapeloa's version, which has been accepted as the "clan-song of the Moletsanes" (Khumalo 1998, p. 28):¹² an interesting example of the re-inscribing of identity through (re)composition.

There are two main sections (bars 1–12 and 13–23) with a *dal segno* repeat at bar 13 that reinforces the refrain-like second section, although if this *is* a refrain the piece seems to end prematurely. The opening melody's rapid descent of a major 9th in one-and-a-half bars is striking, as is the way the bass rises towards it.¹³ Musical texture is characterised by restless movement in harmony and rhythm with frequent parallels between soprano and bass, as there are in choral songs where traditional bow harmonies are implied.¹⁴ The piece uses new material every few bars, each idea is repeated, and the ending is not climactic. It has no tempo or expressive markings – prominent in choral music and unusually absent here – and there is an avoidance of Western notions of harmonic tension. Mohapeloa uses material in relation to the song's length in a way that makes it open-ended, and if not "postmodern" (for 1935 this might be stretching a point), it sounds at least modern; but modern within an African rather than European discourse of modernity.

¹² The song is performed in competitions as an "indigenous composition" rather than a "traditional" piece, and is therefore sung without movement. This plus the fact that it has been included by Khumalo in the first volume of SAMRO's *South Africa Sings* as if it were a piece of "art" music, suggests a reading of it as a "composition", rather than as an "arrangement".

¹³ The potential for the soprano part to exist as "melody" independent of the bass and some of the original harmonies is nicely realised in a jazzed-up version of the song recorded by Sibongile Khumalo in 1996.

¹⁴ "Bow harmonies" are chords based on overtones from two or three fundamental notes roughly a tone apart.

Doh is A

S: 1 .r | 1 .l :s .m, r | d :r .l, | s, :- | :1 .r | 1 .l :s .m, r | d :r .l, {

Tshoa-ra kho-ng, Re ee—koa-na Ta-ung, Tshoa-ra kho-ng, Re ee—koa-na Ta-

A: .s, | d :- .t, | l, :- .d | s, :-m, | m, : .s, | d :t, .t, | l, :l, .f, {

Tshoa-ra khong, Re ee koo Ta-ung, Tshoa-ra ko-to, Re ee koo-

T: .f | m :- .d | f :- .d | m :-d | d : .r | m :r .r | f :r .d {

Tshoa-ra khong, Re ee koo Ta-ung, Tshoa-ra ko-to, Re ee koo-

B: .t, | d, :- .d, | f, :- .l, | d :-s, | m, :r, .t, | d, :-s, | l, .f, .l, {

Tshoa-ra khong, Re ee koo Ta-ung, Re ee koo-

For rehearsal only

4

ung, Ha Mo-le-tsa - ne, Ha Mo-le-tsa - ne; Re e'o

na Ta-ung, Ha Mo-le-tsa - ne, Ha Mo-le-tsa - ne; Re e'o

na Ta-ung, Ha Mo-le-tsa - ne, Ha Mo-le-tsa - ne; Re e'o

na Ta-ung, Ha Mo-le-tsa - ne, Ha Mo-le-tsa - ne; Re e'o

Ex 1 "U Ea Kae" by J. Mohapeloa bars 1-6 © SAMRO

(Translation [Khumalo]: Take your stick, and let us go to Taung, home of the Moletsanes)

Where does this piece's musical identity come from? Lying behind it is the composer's experience of folk music, hymns, European parlour songs and art music, and probably early jazz. His familiarity with some European classics might have been engendered in the 1930s by tonic sol-fa books published in his home town, Morija (Lesotho), such as *Lipina Tsa Likolo tse Phahameng* (Morija Sesuto Book Depot 1985(1907)), which includes music by Mozart, Beethoven, Weber, and Rossini. The remains of Mohapeloa's library in Morija includes vocal scores by Donizetti and Meyerbeer, perhaps acquired later along with *The world of music* by Sandved (1957), and Ewen's *The complete book of 20th-century music* (1959). Mohapeloa was already by the late 1930s, however, a composer whose reputation had grown from home-singing to national status (see Sibandze 2003). His musical experience was fairly wide and he had already published two books of choral songs (Mohapeloa 1988a and 1996; the third volume in this series followed in 1947 (Mohapeloa 1988b)).

In 1938 he enrolled at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) as an "occasional" student (Huskiison 1969, 161). He was almost thirty, with junior secondary education at Morija Training Institute and senior secondary education at the South African Native College (Fort Hare University) behind him, plus some correspondence courses through the University of South Africa (Pretoria) (see Sibandze *ibid.*, and Khumalo 1998, p. 10). At Wits he came "face to face with Music Composition" as Huskiison puts it (*ibid.*, p. 162). It was Kirby who provided the face of composition,¹⁵ while W.P. Paff was an "outstanding teacher of harmony and counterpoint" (Khumalo *ibid.*, p. 28).¹⁶

My take on "U Ea Kae" is not to see it as an early song written before the composer knew what he was doing, or as arrangement, or as a simple hybrid, which is how African choral music has often been seen by ethnomusicologists – combining "African" and "Western" elements (see Mngoma 1981 and Mthethwa 1988). Even Khumalo prolongs this somewhat polarising view, seeing Mohapeloa's training in Western music as "not stilt[ing] the Africanism ... but rather provid[ing] a means by which to express it" (*ibid.*). I suggest that the tension is not so much between African and Western but between what Mohapeloa learnt compositionally from Kirby, and what he felt able or inclined to apply. Mohapeloa was arguably more of "a composer" than his teacher (who was more a teacher and researcher). His early compositions experiment with stylistic traits from Europe, America, and Africa, grafting a range of new onto the already known, in much

¹⁵ Kirby notes in his memoirs: "I was awarded the Diploma of ARCM in Composition [in 1913], and at last I found myself with a real qualification as a professional musician" (1967a, p. 74).

¹⁶ Mohapeloa did not appear to complete his diploma, perhaps because of the ill-health that dogged much of his early life and disrupted his education.

the same way his contemporaries in South African jazz were doing in the late 1930s through 1950s, to create marabi and kwela. African material (if this is what is meant by “traditional”) was only part of what he used to realise his compositional identity, against such an eclectic background.

What about the relationship between the two men? In the “Epilogue” to his autobiography (1967a), Kirby lists many famous white South African musicians among his legacy of students, but Mohapeloa’s name is not mentioned. Someone called “Mohapela” is referred to very disparagingly in a letter from Friedrich Hartmann to Kirby many years later (Hartmann was one of Kirby’s students), in answer to an enquiry by Kirby, but there is no mention of Mohapeloa among Kirby’s own surviving papers at UCT or Wits.¹⁷ Mohapeloa, on the other hand, claimed in later life, “I am what I am because of [Kirby’s] guidance, tuition, and everything”, and asked his daughter-in-law Joyce to name her first-born son Percival after his mentor (Joyce Mohapeloa, Author’s Interview 28.09.06). So how, and what, did he learn from Kirby about composition? I turn here for more evidence, to one of Kirby’s own works.

“A SOTHO LAMENT” BY PERCIVAL KIRBY

In 1939, the year after Mohapeloa began studying at Wits, Kirby produced a Sesotho folksong arrangement he called “A Sotho Lament” (Kirby 2004)¹⁸, the first verse of which is shown in Ex. 2. The descent and rise in melody represents “an African melody” while words like “hearken”, “didst”, “implore”, and the bland chordal accompaniment place it in the parlour-song genre of Edwardian Britain (see Van der Merwe 1989). It is far easier to sing than the Mohapeloa, whose melodic and rhythmic twists are challenging. Kirby’s three verses are almost identical and the verse is in two sections (bars 6–14 and 15–24).

¹⁷ Hartmann writes: “I am not sure at the moment about Mohapela [sic]. He probably was the Native B.Mus student who was in the Department when I arrived here [Wits]. He was a hopeless case, failed certain second and third year subjects and disappeared. He would not deserve to be mentioned in your presentation of S.A. musicians anyhow” (Museums and Archives, University of Cape Town: Kirby Papers file BC 750, “Correspondence”). If this *was* an opinion of J.P. Mohapeloa, it is Hartmann’s not Kirby’s, as far as we know.

¹⁸ No. 1 of Kirby’s *Three African Idylls* (republished by SAMRO in 2004), both words and music by Kirby.

Andante

Voice

Piano

f *p* *dim.* *p*

Ped. Ped. Ped. (ad lib. throughout)

Oh_ hear-ken, Be -

- lov - ed, Why_ didst thou de-part? Why_ didst break my heart? Why

— didst thou de-part? Why_ didst break my heart? With grief both night and day My heart is

dolce

burn - ing, To heav'n a-bove I pray, Im - plor - ing thy re - turn

dim

Ex 2 "A Sotho Lament" by P. Kirby bars 1–24 © SAMRO

The key is E major with modal inflections in the harmony and a drone bass that makes it "traditional" sounding. There is a teleology of phrasing, and extensions in bars 13–14 and 19–24 are techniques learnt in elementary Western composition, as are the piano embellishments in verses 2 and 3, to alleviate the boredom of repetition. Perhaps the comparison is unfair: this is an arrangement, not pretending to be a sophisticated composition; Kirby was a student of Stanford, trying to show here in a creative way his

understanding of foreign African traditions, of which he was a dedicated scholar. What is more interesting is the way it shows how Kirby *interpreted* African music compositionally, seeing its elements as in need of framing, of the civilising lineaments of Western harmonic embellishment. This, I suggest, is partly what learning Western composition may have meant for Mohapeloa: a conforming of his language to Western expectations. Such conformity, however, is precisely what makes “A Sotho Lament” sound simplistic and repetitive next to “U Ea Kae”.

And it is Mohapeloa’s piece that has lasted: it has become a “classic”, still prescribed in choral competitions; it has been reimagined as popular music (Khumalo 1996, track 4), and arranged for orchestra (Cheyne 1997 and Hankinson 1999). What actually happened, then, during those composition lessons in the late 1930s? Were there disagreements or did Mohapeloa passively do his exercises, conform, and decide later what to use in his own work? I suggest he was offered, but mostly did not take on board judging from his later compositions, a curriculum of scientifically based rules of four-part voicing, voice-leading, phrasing and harmonic progression in a Western musical idiom. Early counterpoint might have been part of this process (also music history) but not the serialism of Schoenberg, which was too “new” in the 1930s; and for melodic writing the ideal types offered by the Grade and Licentiate exam syllabuses were along early 19th-century lines (as echoed in “A Sotho Lament”).

This way of learning to compose – and what the letters after Khabi Mngoma’s name also denote as the outcome – symbolises the unequal power-relation of one kind of musical identity over another. The hegemonic Western system has its own ideological history: it developed out of an early 19th-century European notion of music’s autonomous status as high art, when moreover “music instruction and music organisations were seized on to help consolidate a middle-class society by means of appreciating music for its own sake” as Sanna Pederson puts it (cited in Treitler 1999, 374). This view of music as autonomous object rather than social text – and the tension Stokes and Scherzinger point to – is the work of decades of Western – specifically British – music education at university level.

Harmony and counterpoint studies in the academy as preparation for composition were consolidated by Sir Frederick Gore Ouseley, who as the new Professor of Music at Oxford in 1855 instituted “major reforms of curriculum”, introducing exams in “Harmony and Counterpoint, Fugue, Canon, Formal Analysis, and Musical History, in addition to the submission of written composition of prescribed nature” (Rainbow 1989, 239). Notice how this separates music theory from history (which allows the former to remain in a timeless present), and both of them from composition: all three axiomatically Western (this didn’t even need to be said in 1855), but by far the larger

emphasis on techniques learned *before* composition. Oxford “set the pattern generally adopted” by other universities (*ibid.*, p. 241), including Wits in the 1930s. This approach separated historical and performing contexts of music from rules around compositional abstraction, which could then remain a formalist pursuit in the academy.¹⁹ Teachers were able to downgrade music that did not observe the rules without having to take into account historical or social context, let alone cultural difference. “Difference” was in fact well preserved in Kirby and Mohapeloa’s case, as one can see clearly through their own music.

"BARALA BA JERUSALEMA" BY MICHAEL MOERANE

Mohapeloa’s contemporary, Michael Moerane presents another case. His “serious study of music” (Khumalo 1998, 14) or mastery of the rules, lasted from 1930 to 1941, culminating in a BMus obtained through the University of South Africa. During the eleven long years he took to achieve this he passed thirteen courses including Harmony & Counterpoint, History of Music, Score Reading, Orchestration and Instrumentation, Double Counterpoint, and Fugue.²⁰ Moerane’s “*Barala ba Jerusalema*” (“O Daughters of Jerusalem”, adapted from the *Song of Songs*), was probably composed in the 1930s or even later, but the manuscript only came to light in 1998 in the SAMRO Music Library in Johannesburg; and it was immediately published (Khumalo 1998, 10²¹). The first section is given in Ex. 3.

¹⁹ The type of theory tuition set by Oxbridge and London universities was generally only available to external students (residential courses in music were only offered at Oxford from 1914, for example), so it was natural that bodies such as the London Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music (established 1889), should apply the same notion of progression to the new Grade exams. The promise of self-education within an ideology of progress or scientific modernism in the “grades” caught on in South Africa from the start, and passing their theory exams became the benchmark by which many aspiring musicians, black and white, measured themselves as musically trained.

²⁰ Kirby obtained an academic record, now among his papers at UCT, from the University of South Africa in 1962 while he was pursuing the case of the (then) missing score of Moerane’s symphonic poem *Fatše la Hesó*.

²¹ I have not seen the manuscript version.

Deh is C

S: m' : s : d' | s : - : m | f : s : - . l | s : - : m | s : f : - . m | m : r : - . m {

Ba - ra - li ba Je - ru - sa - le - ma, Ba - ra - li ba Je - ru - sa -

A: m : s : f | f : - : m | m : r : r | r : d : - . ta, l : t : - . d | d : d : t, {

Ba - ra - li ba Je - ru - sa - le - ma, Ba - ra - li ba Je - ru - sa -

T: s : a : d' : r' | d' : r' : m' : r' | d' : d' : - . t | t : l : - . s | m : f : s | l : l : t {

Ba - ra - li ba Je - ru - sa - le - ma, Ba - ra - li ba Je - ru - sa -

B: d : d : m : s | l : t : d' : t | l : s : - . f | m : r : - . de | de : r : m | f : f : s {

Ba - ra - li ba Je - ru - sa - le - ma, Ba - ra - li ba Je - ru - sa -

Moderato
For rehearsal only

le - ma, Ke mo - tshoa - na e - - mpa ke mo - tie Joa -

le - ma, Ke mo - tshoa - - na e - - mpa ke mo - tie Joa -

le - - - ma, Ke mo - tshoa - - na e - - mpa ke mo - tie Joa -

le - - - ma, Ke mo - tshoa - - na e - - mpa ke mo - tie Joa -

Ex 3 "Barala ba Jerusalema" by M. Moerane bars 1-6 © SAMRO

(Translation [Khumalo]: O daughters of Jerusalem, I am black but beautiful)

The piece keeps straining against conventions. Driven more by its melodic line than the Mohapelo and within an idiom less redolent of folksong, it uses a key (C major) and chords, in an ostensibly functional way. But there is a tension below the surface, for it intensifies chromatically (bars 9–15) towards the words “do not stare at me because I am black”, erupting in bar 15 into a series of vertical textures that flaunt conventional harmonic voicing (“tell me, tell me”). In bar 16 it suddenly changes direction again, the harmonic “deviance” is submerged (“where you tend your flock”), and the section ends abruptly before the double bar with a rapid unison descent to the tonal centre, C. Rather than closure, however, this comes across as an interruption, an abrupt displacement of the expectation set up by the previous bars.

A contrasting middle section in the relative minor follows, but this similarly deviates from its own path a few bars later, with choral shouts at a high register and in a more urgent tempo. The uses of harmony in this piece – certainly the most important aspect of its musical identity – are not easily positioned within the language of European art music of the mid-20th century, but also not within Victorian norms – if anything they relate to the disintegrating tonal structures of early 20th-century Europe, and most of all to a “new African” concept of dissonance. What the piece also shows better than the Mohapelo is a close representation of the text, with resultant harmonic tensions that can, I argue, be read as political signifiers. I turn to how it has been reconceived in the post-apartheid era, where it has been recomposed as a solo art song with both piano and orchestral accompaniment, by Hans Roosenschoon.

"BARALA BA JERUSALEMA" RECOMPOSED BY HANS ROOSENSCHOON

Roosenschoon's arrangement is a total reimagining, for it changes a number of elements, imposing a new notion of how it should “go”. The first page of the Roosenschoon-Moerane score is given in Ex. 4.

Moderato J.=66

Michael Moerane
verw. Hans Roosenschoon

Tenor

mp

Ba-

Clarinet

p

Marimba

Strings

5

ra- li ba Je- ru- sa- le-ma, Ba- ra- li ba Je- ru- sa-

8

le- ma, Ke mo- tsoa- na e- mpa ke mo- tle Joa-

11

le ka te-nte tsu Ke- da- re, Le se ke' la nta-li- ma ha

Ex 4 "Barala ba Jerusalema" by M. Moerane, solo version bars 1-13 by H. Roosenschoon
© SAMRO

Most of Moerane's interesting subtexture – and subtext, because the original relied heavily on word-painting – is removed. The melody is foregrounded as in a 19th-century art song – as indeed it was in Kirby's "A Sotho Lament". The chromatic lines seething below Moerane's surface are replaced by diatonic decorative accompaniment: semiquavers taken from the original agitated chromatic bass line in bars 11 and 12 are brought into service in a totally different way, as rippling adornment, wrapping the melody like a chocolate box. Chromatic ("black") notes become diatonic ("white"), perceived dissonances are turned into consonances or disappear altogether. The texture is stabilised, and a Western notion of harmonic convention reinstated. The result is an erasure of Moerane's idiom, an ignorance of what he might have been trying to say: it has become Schubert with a Sesotho text. The idiom kicking its way to the surface of Moerane's music, expressing his identity as a composer, is unrecognisable to a white composer fifty years later.

COMPOSITION AS "PROPHECY" RATHER THAN "TRAVESTY"

The African pieces show an emerging modernist language coming from a uniquely South African place, however much European musical conventions are held up as models. If we are to read these pieces as autonomous objects, it has to be within a tradition other than the European mainstream, for considering such music as "travesty" so obviously misses the mark. I end by suggesting another reading, inspired by the idea that it is postmodern, drawing on Jacques Attali's notion of composition as "foreshadowing", or prophecy (from *Noise: The Political Economy of Music*, 1985). His notion of composition depends on the idea that anyone can "com-pose" – literally "put together" a piece – not only those exposed to what Susan McClary in her "Afterword" to his book calls the "rigid institutions of specialised musical training" (McClary 1996, 156). Attali reveals the "noise" music can make, with its ability to question and disrupt the status quo, paralleling society and even foreshadowing in sound what a new political order might look like. This, I suggest, is what Mohapeloa and Moerane did, in different ways. But when the one came "face to face" with composition teaching and the latter face to face with an arranger, their music was forced to "renounce [its] responses, to discover that the musical phenomenon is [only] to be understood mechanistically" (*ibid.*, p. 150). The identities the African composers already had were submerged, in the name of a tradition of music education that preserved the mystery of Western instrumental music in staff notation, "accessible only to a trained priesthood" in order to preserve its prestige "in a culture that values quantifiable knowledge over mere expression" (*ibid.*).

The language of choralism is not an archaic or unschooled language, but one that foreshadows – even in the 1930s or '40s – the avoidance of modernisms that now

characterise Euro-American new music in the late 20th and 21st centuries. It displaces Western music's sense of past and present, asks us to reconsider what makes the "contemporary" or the "old-fashioned". Especially it calls into question educational practices where Western theories of musical language continue to shape perceptions of musical identity, "conditioning us not to recognise silencing – not to realise that something vital may be missing from our experience" of a vital stream of black South African music (*ibid.*). It asks that we read choral compositions in order to hear what is there rather than what is not there, so as to better understand the "noise" they are making.

REFERENCES

- Agawu, K. 1987. Conversations with Ephraim Amu: The making of a composer. *The Black Perspective in Music* 15(1), pp. 51–63.
- Agawu, K. 2003. *Representing African music: Postcolonial notes, queries, positions*. New York and London: Routledge.
- Associated Board. 1890–1901. *The Associated Board of the Royal Academy of Music and the Royal College of Music for local examinations in music: President: H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, K.G.: Balance Sheet and First [to Twelfth] Annual Report [Local Centre Reports 1890 to 1901]*. London: [Associated Board] 52 New Bond Street.
- Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. 1948. *The Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music 1889–1948*. London: [ABRSM] Central Office, 14 Bedford Square.
- Attali, J., trans. B. Massumi. 1985(1977). *Noise: The political economy of music*. Minnesota & London: University of Minnesota Press.
- Ballantine, C. 1993. *Marabi nights: Early South African jazz and vaudeville*. Johannesburg: Ravan Press.
- Cheyne, M., arr. 1997. "U Ea Kai?" [sic] [Arr. for choir, percussion, harp, & orchestra]. Johannesburg: Stone Productions.
- Detterbeck, M. 2003. *South African choral music (amakwaya): Song, contest and the formation of identity*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of KwaZulu-Natal.
- Ehrlich, C., S. McVeigh and M. Musgrave. 2000. London: Concert life (i) 1800–1850 [and] (ii) 1850–1900. In S. Sadie (ed.): *The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians* Second Edition. London: Macmillan Publishers Ltd. and New York: Grove's Dictionaries Inc, Vol. 15, pp. 137–141.
- Erlmann, V. 1991. *African Stars: Studies in black South African performance*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.
- Ewen, D. 1959(1952). *The complete book of 20th-century music*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.
- Hankinson, M., arr. 1999. "U Ea Kae" [sic] [Arr. for choir & orchestra]. Braamfontein, Johannesburg: SAMRO.

- Hansen, D. 1968. *The life and work of Benjamin Tyamzashe: A contemporary Xhosa composer*. Occasional Paper Number Eleven. Rhodes University, Grahamstown: Institute of Social and Economic Research.
- Huskinson, Y. 1969. *The Bantu composers of Southern Africa/Die Bantoe-komponiste van Suider-Afrika*. Johannesburg: South African Broadcasting Corporation.
- Khumalo, J. M., (gen. ed.) 1998. *South Africa Sings Volume 1. African Choral Repertoire in Dual Notation*. Johannesburg: South African Music Rights Organisation.
- Khumalo, J.M. 2005. "Serious" music in an African context. *NewMusic SA: Bulletin of the International Society for Contemporary Music – South African Section*, Third Issue, 2004/5, pp. 13–15.
- Khumalo, S. 1996. CD *Ancient evenings*. [no label].
- Kirby Papers. [n.d.] Museums and archives, University of Cape Town: file BC 750, "Correspondence".
- Kirby, P. 1934. *The musical instruments of the native races of South Africa*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Kirby, P. 1936. The musical practices of the /?Auni and ≠Khomani Bushmen. *Bantu Studies* 10(2), December, pp. 373–432.
- Kirby, P. 1967a. *Wits end*. Cape Town: Howard Timmins.
- Kirby, P. 1967b. The effect of Western civilization on Bantu music. In I Schapera (ed.): *Western civilization and the Natives of South Africa*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, pp. 131-140.
- Kirby, P. 1971. The changing face of African music south of the Zambezi. In K. Wachsmann (ed.): *Essays on music and history in Africa*. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press, pp. 243–254.
- Kirby, P. 2004(1939). *Three African Idylls*. Braamfontein, Johannesburg: SAMRO.
- Lucia, C. ed. 2005. *The world of South African music: A reader*. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholar's Press.
- Lucia, C. 2007. How critical is music theory? *Critical Arts* 21(1), pp. 166-189.
- McClary, S. 1996(1985). Afterword. In J. Attali, *Noise: The political economy of music*. Minnesota & London: University of Minnesota Press, pp. 149–158.
- Mngoma, K. 1981. The correlation of folk and art music among African composers. In A. Tracey (ed.): *Papers Presented at the Second Symposium on Ethnomusicology*. Grahamstown: International Library of African Music, pp. 61–69.
- Mohapelo, J. P. 1988a(1935). *Meloli le Lithallere tsa Afrika, I*. Morija, Lesotho: Morija Sesotho Book Depot.
- Mohapelo, J. P. 1988b(1947). *Meloli le Lithallere tsa Afrika, III: Buka ea Boraro*. Morija, Lesotho: Morija Sesotho Book Depot.
- Mohapelo, J.P. 1996(1939). *Meloli le Lithallere tsa Afrika, II*. Morija, Lesotho: Morija Sesotho Book Depot.
- Mohapelo, J.P. 2002(1951). Preface. In *Khalimo-Nosi tsa "Mino oa Kajeno": Harnessing salient features of modern African music*, [2]. Morija, Lesotho: Morija Sesotho Book Depot.

- Morija Sesuto Book Depot. 1985(1907). *Lipina tsa Likolo tse Phahameng*. Morija, Lesotho: Morija Sesuto Book Depot.
- Mthethwa, B. 1988. The songs of Alfred A. Kumalo: A study in Nguni and Western musical syncretism. In A. Tracey (ed.): *Papers Presented at the Sixth Symposium on Ethnomusicology, 1987*. Grahamstown: International Library of African Music, pp. 28-32.
- Mugovhani, G. 1998. *The manifestations of the "African style" in the works of Mzilikazi Khumalo*. Unpublished MMus. thesis, University of the Witwatersrand.
- Olwage, G. 2002. Scriptions of the choral: The historiography of black South African choralism. *SAMUS: Journal of the Musicological Society of Southern Africa* 22, pp. 29-45.
- Olwage, G. 2003. *Music and (post)colonialism: The dialectics of choral culture on a South African frontier*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Rhodes University.
- Olwage, G. 2006. John Knox Bokwe, colonial composer: Tales about race and music. *Journal of the Royal Musical Association* 131(1), pp. 1-37.
- Paxinos, S. 1994a. The early years. *Musicus: Journal of the Department of Music, University of South Africa, Pretoria*, 22(2), pp. 9-33.
- Paxinos, S. 1994b. The breach with the Associated Board of the Royal Schools of Music. *Musicus: Journal of the Department of Music, University of South Africa, Pretoria*, 22(2), pp. 38-53.
- Rainbow, B. 1986. The rise of popular music education in nineteenth-century England. *Victorian Studies* 30(1), pp. 25-49.
- Rainbow, B. 1989. *Music in educational thought and practice: A survey from 800 BC*. Aberystwyth, Wales: Boethius Press.
- Sandved, K.B., ed. 1957(1954). *The world of music*. 2 vols. London: The Waverley Book Co.
- Scherzinger, Martin. 2001. Negotiating the music-theory/African-music nexus: A political critique of ethnomusicological anti-formalism and a strategic analysis of the harmonic patterning of the Shona mbira song "Nyamaropa". *Perspectives of New Music* 39(1), pp. 5-117.
- Sibandze, M. 2003. Dr. J.P. Mohapeloa: The man and his music. www.africanchorus.org/Voam/Voam1014.htm. [Date of access 19.11.2005].
- Stokes, M. 1994. *Ethnicity, identity and music: The musical construction of place*. Oxford and New York: Berg.
- Treitler, L. 1999. The historiography of music: Issues of past and present. In N. Cook and M. Everist (eds.): *Rethinking music*. Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 356-377.
- Van der Merwe, P. 1989. *Origins of the popular style: The antecedents of twentieth-century popular music*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Interview

Mohapeloa, Joyce Maloyisane. Author's interview. Johannesburg, 28.09.06.

THE HYMNIC IDENTITIES OF THE AFRIKANER

Elsabé Kloppers, University of Pretoria, South Africa

ABSTRACT

Hymns are symbols of the cultural identities of churches and nations. Often a convergence between hymnic identities and national identities occurs. In order to recognise unconscious influences, biases and unacknowledged structures of power, the hymnic identities of people within various churches and religious spheres, and within various nations, need critical reflection. Christians in the Afrikaans-speaking churches also have certain hymnic identities, although these are seldom recognised as such. In this essay the hymnic identities of certain members of the Afrikaans-speaking Dutch Reformed Churches, and the possible convergence of their hymnic identities with a national identity, are researched. A short overview of the history of the Afrikaner is presented and related to their religious views. Religious views converging with nationalist views and myths of a history, resulting in a civil religion, are related to the influence of these religious views on the hymnic tradition and identities of the Afrikaner.

INTRODUCTION

Hymnody forms an essential part of the religious language and (self-)expression of most believers within the Christian religion. Although most believers would seldom recognise it as such, hymns are not only about religious and theological expression. Hymnody also forms an important part of the cultural identities, frames of (world) interpretation, ideologies, self-concepts, symbols, moral values and the collective cultural memory of believers/Christians within a nation, which means that Christians within all nations have certain hymnic and hymnological identities.¹

¹ *Hymnody* can be described as: 1. Hymns and their development. 2. The art of singing hymns. *Hymnology* is the scholarly study of hymns and their composition (Deist 1984, p. 77). Hymnic identity thus refers to an identity developed consciously or unconsciously by the (often naïve) singing of certain hymns. Hymnological identities would be the views shared by certain groups of scholars within a community. The views of scholars may often influence the hymnic identities of their communities, but not necessarily so.

Hymns are symbols of cultural identities of churches and nations (Kück & Kurzke 2003). A convergence between hymnic identities and national identities often occurs. The hymnic or hymnological identities of people within various churches and religious spheres, and within various nations, need critical reflection in order to recognise unconscious influences, biases and unacknowledged structures of power.² The hymnic practices and identities of Christians in the Afrikaans-speaking Dutch Reformed Churches therefore also need thorough investigation.

Although the history, national identity and religion of the Afrikaans-speaking people (called Afrikaners) are complex issues that have been researched extensively, and although the convergence of religious and cultural identity in the form of an "Afrikaner civil religion" has received much attention (Moodie 1975; Hofmeyr & Vorster 1984), the possible hymnic and hymnological identities of the Afrikaner within this "civil religion" have not received due attention. Important questions that should be researched are the way that religious, cultural and political views could have influenced views on hymnody, how hymnody could have been influenced by the socio-religious views of the Afrikaner within this (civil) religion, and, reciprocally, how hymnody could have contributed to the formation and strengthening of the religious and cultural identities of the Afrikaner.

From the theoretical perspective of a *hermeneutic of suspicion* (a term originally coined by Paul Ricoeur 1973/1978, p. 214), I investigate the ideology-laden context and praxis of hymnody in Afrikaans within a certain historical period (circa 1930 to the present) and try to relate it to concepts and theories of religious and cultural identity, processes of (self-)perception and (self-) interpretation, and the influence of these aspects on the hymnic tradition and identity of the Afrikaner. Issues that are addressed are the meaning of the metrical psalms³, certain hymn texts and tunes that were particularly significant,

² "Religious language, symbols, frames of world interpretation, and, in particular, moral religious values like obedience to God or loyalty to political institutions are, in principle, open for non-theological interpretations and susceptible to social applications which can legitimize processes of corporate (societal, cultural) instrumentalization mostly concerning national, political, economic, and even racist purposes ... A hermeneutic of suspicion is (thus) an indispensable task ..." (Nipkow 1999, pp. 93–112).

³ Metrical psalms are literal versifications, paraphrases or reproductions of the biblical text of the Book of the Psalms in vernacular poetry, meant to be sung as hymns in a church. In some churches all 150 psalms and all the metaphors in a psalm have to be produced literally from the Hebrew text. In some circles they are regarded as "God's own Word at one slight remove" (Davies 1970, p. 14). For a long time the metrical structure has also been associated with hymnody – verses concerning the faith, or verses on any part of scripture. As the concept of what constitutes a hymn is broadening, the hymnologist Emily Brink (1998, p. 54) suggests

the hymnals in the Afrikaans language (it will be shown how the Afrikaans language is an issue of identity), and the differing reasons for the preservation of (certain) hymns.

I argue that it was not only hymnological (musical, textual and theological) aspects that determined the formation of the hymnic identity/ies of the Afrikaner, but that cultural, political, ideological, anthropological-psychological, nationalist and conservationist views also played a major role.

FAVOURITES AT FIVE: PSALM 130 AND *NEVER ON SUNDAY*

My parents bought a second-hand piano when I was five years old. Feeling the keys of the wonderful instrument under my hands, I immediately tried out two tunes that first came to mind: *Never on Sunday*⁴ and Psalm 130. My parents loved the psalm. But my sister, then a thirteen-year-old teenager, was delighted to hear the popular song. Unconsciously I had picked it up from LM Radio⁵ – the radio station my sister listened to illegally.

There were other tunes I picked up unconsciously. Going to church was part of our life. And singing hymns and psalms was a part of going to church. So as a child I already had my favourites. Not the one-liners that children are bombarded with today. I loved the full-blown hymns⁶ – those that the congregation sang with much passion and enthusiasm “for the Lord to hear” (as I believed then).

Out of the depths I cry, o Lord. Please hear my call ... Why would a child of five love a psalm with a sombre text such as this? Looking back, it surely was the tune that primarily appealed to me. But the tune for that specific metrical psalm is not the one from the Genevan Psalter (1539) that is still used in Reformed Churches worldwide.

that the term *metrical hymnody* may be helpful to describe what once was the exclusive structure for (English) psalmody.

⁴ Theme song for the film *Never on Sunday* (1960). Music: Manos Hadjidakis. Words: Billy Towne.

⁵ Broadcasting from Lourenco Marques in Mozambique, the radio station also played music that was banned in South Africa – therefore many Afrikaans-speaking youngsters were prohibited from listening to LM Radio.

⁶ Cf. Alan Gaunt, currently chairperson of the Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland: “I am profoundly grateful that as a boy I was nurtured on solid hymnody. Not many of the hymns that I know so well from those days are in current use, nor do I want them to be, but there was nothing in them that I have had to unlearn. They were not made up of biblical cliché and they were full of real thought. And what is more, though I may not have understood them, they communicated faith to me” (Gaunt 2006, p. 41).



Ex 1 Psalm 130 (Genevan tune)

We sang a home-grown tune in triple time, dated somewhere in the 19th century.⁷ Quite waltzy, despite the very slow tempo in which it was sung – which brings me to the second possibility for appreciating the psalm. It was sung with such sincerity and intensity that it told me of a world beyond this existence – God’s world. I believed hymn singing to be the purest form of religious activity.

⁷ The tune is similar to the tune “Greenfields”, and ascribed to Lewis Edson (ca. 1770–1820). See also Cillió 1991.



Ex 2: Psalm 130 (*Liederwysie*⁸)

At that stage I gave no thought to the possibility of hymn singing as being as much of a cultural, political and even ideology-laden praxis as religion itself is. But unwittingly, it was also on the level of the cultural identity, self-concept and symbols of “my people” that this psalm touched me. It was not only about religion, about being part of a Reformed Church, but also about being part of the Afrikaans-speaking people – thus part of a group of people with a very specific history and view of their collective story.

When I heard the psalm being sung, and joined in, I joined in the history of people who were persecuted for their faith 300 years ago and who fled to the southern tip of Africa.⁹ I remembered my sincere grandfather crying while telling the stories about what the English troops did to his mother and sisters, before they burned down their farm and cattle during the Anglo-Boer war. And I heard the *Angst* of my parents for being a small minority of whites among (what they deemed to be) the hostile black masses. To join in singing *Out of the Depths I cry, o Lord* seemed quite natural in these circumstances.

As a scholar in the field of hymnology and especially as a member of the various committees for a new hymnal in Afrikaans, I later came to realise that the psalm (like

⁸ See Cillié 1993 for an extensive discussion of the *Liederwysies* (folk hymn tunes).

⁹ I then believed the Huguenots had fled *only* to the Cape of Good hope – a kind of chosen country.

various other psalms and hymns in Afrikaans) was actually part of the collective cultural memory of the Afrikaans-speaking people. I came to realise that apart from their theological and liturgical meanings, the psalms were also used as a device to stabilise and protect the collective memory of a people in a period of uncertainty and of emerging nationalism.

From my personal experiences as a member of the hymnal committees and other committees for church music, I accordingly present what I believe to be the reasons and motivation for some of these practices. My personal and subjective experiences, presenting in some instances an insider perspective from within a specific context, will be related to “objective” evidence. However, in an unexplored field where one necessarily also needs to speculate on “possible reasons”, it is not always possible to present hard “objective evidence”. The possibility for insider, or subjective, presentations to be regarded as “scientific” was opened up by Paul Ricoeur (1981, pp. 145–181) with what he called the *logic of subjective possibility*. Feminist theologians, such as Linda Hogan (1995, pp. 9-84) demonstrated excellently how a broader view on “science” could reveal the unique or marginalised, especially regarding the diverse and individual experiences of women. I endeavour to present “proof” of “facts” within an interpretative paradigm¹⁰ in order to reveal the marginalised or unrecognised – also as a female theologian/hymnologist working in a male-dominated environment where any critique that I expressed was also seen as “coming from a woman”.

In order to view the hymnody of the Afrikaner in context, it is necessary to present a very brief overview of some parts of the history, beliefs and cultural myths of the Afrikaans-speaking people and the factors that influenced these beliefs. One always can present only a part of history. I will therefore present those facets of history and cultural myths that are most relevant to the practices of hymnody within the Afrikaans-speaking community.

A SHORT HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE AFRIKAANS-SPEAKING PEOPLE

The Afrikaans-speaking people derive mostly from the Dutch, who in 1652 established a refreshment post at the Cape of Good Hope, and the French Huguenots, who arrived between 1688 and 1700.¹¹ Dutch became the main language, especially because of the

¹⁰ See also the essay by van den Heever 2002: “Expressing the ineffable: Experiencing from within and describing from the outside”.

¹¹ Being born Viljoen (from the French Villion), I used to be very proud of my Huguenot descent – thinking of my ancestors as people who were persecuted for their faith. Later I start wondering why they came to the Cape already in 1671 – thirteen years before the Edict of

repressive language policies of the Dutch Government for the Cape (Here XVII). French became extinct in the Cape in less than hundred years (Boucher 1981). On 14 August 1875 the First Afrikaans Language Movement started, especially with a view to translating the Bible into Afrikaans (Benyon 1988, p. 170). This is the official beginning of the “independence” of Afrikaans, a more informal language that had developed from Dutch. In some circles this language movement was met with resistance, as there were people who wanted to preserve a “pure” language and who regarded Afrikaans as inferior because of its brevity and “informality”. These people regarded Dutch as the more elegant and elevated language, especially for use in worship.

At various stages England tried to seize the Cape. The most successful endeavour was in 1806 (Le Cordeur 1988, pp. 76–81), from which time an extensive and aggressive programme of Anglicisation was followed to “civilise” the Dutch. This programme meant especially linguistic repression at school, in church and in state or official matters. The suppression contributed to growing feelings of nationalism among the Dutch – and in fact among other groups in South Africa as well.¹²

In 1836–1838 the *Voortrekkers* (first trekkers) embarked on the Great Trek from the Cape to the interior of the country in an attempt to be freed from British rule. In the mid-19th century independent republics were established by the Boers (earlier called Voortrekkers – thus Afrikaans-speaking South Africans.) The Anglo-Boer war at the end of the 19th century (1899–1902) shattered the Afrikaner ideals of independence and freedom. The idea of suppression and suffering made feelings of nationalism grow stronger. These feelings of nationalism were strengthened through the re-telling of the stories of their history, especially those of the Anglo-Boer war and the earlier narratives of the Great Trek.¹³ Afrikaner nationalist ideals reached a peak in 1948 when the Nationalist Party came into power. From then on these ideals were actively promoted and further developed.

Nantes was revoked in 1685. Could they possibly simply have been adventurers who were looking for a new life in a new country?

¹² In his discussion of the political and social impact of Englishness in the Cape, historian Robert Ross (1999a, p. 43) declares Englishness to have been “the prime nationalism of South Africa, against which all the subsequent ones, whether Afrikaner or African, reacted ...”

¹³ The Great Trek assumed the centre stage of the “mythical history of Afrikaner nationalism” (Marx 1998, p. 165). Robert Ross (1999b, pp. 39– 42) acknowledges the Great Trek as a formative event in South African history and presents interesting material suggesting how the Great Trek was moulded into one of the central icons of later Afrikaner Nationalism.

RELIGIOUS VIEWS AND THE NATIONAL IDENTITY OF THE AFRIKANER

It is generally acknowledged that the religion of the Afrikaner is traditionally Calvinist (Gerstner 1991; Bosch 1984, p. 18), although Bosch has also argued against the “Calvinist paradigm” and said that the Afrikaners of the 18th and early 19th centuries were, at most, Calvinists only in the cultural sense. As Calvinism in the cultural sense is indeed relevant to the theme of this article, this line of thought is followed, bearing in mind the polyvalence of the issue.

In some circles of the Afrikaans Dutch Reformed Churches there are strong influences of Pietism, which came from the Scottish and English ministers of religion “imported” during the times of British rule. Pietism’s dualistic view of reality – thus reality consisting of a spiritual and worldly dimension and where all focus should be on the spiritual dimension – supports a lifestyle where the whole focus is on piety on a spiritual level, to such an extent that the moral responsibility for others is neglected (Bosch 1984, pp. 18–20).

The era of the Voortrekkers was mostly viewed by the Afrikaners as a heroic period – an epoch of struggle, suffering and sacrifices for freedom. The Voortrekkers/Boers saw a parallel between themselves and the Israelites of the Bible. They viewed themselves as “an Israel” – a small and humble people among the (black “heathen”) nations, protected by God and whom God would even assist in war (Loader 1979, p. 176). The Battle of Blood River (16 December 1838) especially contributed to a view of a chosen people living in covenant with their God. The victory over the Zulus was interpreted as a miracle and a divine intervention – also by later generations in the 20th century. It was seen as an act of God: God had protected the Voortrekkers, giving them and their offspring an identity as “God’s people”. A sense of being a chosen people grew (Liebenberg 1980, in Cameron 1988, p. 139). National identity and religious identity increasingly converged. The interpretation and re-enactment of the history of the Afrikaner thus increasingly promoted the idea of Afrikaner nationalism.

Increasingly the convergence of national identity and religious identity came to be severely criticised – also from within the Afrikaner community. However, many Afrikaners lived by these views until about three decades ago, identifying themselves as the offspring of a small and often oppressed people having a covenant with God. The Day of the Covenant (celebrated on 16 December, the day of the Battle of Blood River) had to be especially honoured – both because of the past, but also as a safeguard for God’s present and future protection.

HYMNS ASSOCIATED WITH THE NATIONAL IDENTITY: METRICAL PSALMS AND FOLK HYMN TUNES

The hymns and metrical psalms that were (and in some circles still are) usually sung during church services and other festivities on the Day of the Covenant (16 December) may give a good idea of the hymns and psalms especially linked with the national identity of the Afrikaner. From numerous programmes of the day found in archives, it can be deduced that the most popular are the metrical versions for Psalms 38, 46, 48, 68 and 130. Stories about the Great Trek and the Anglo-Boer War used to be very prominent at the gatherings of the *volk*¹⁴ on the Day of the Covenant. These metrical psalms were used as a part of an all-encompassing experience of retelling and reliving the stories of history. Psalms 46, 48 and 68 were popular because of the imagery of war, motifs of resistance and of God himself fighting the war.



Ex 3 Psalm 38 (*Liederwysie*/ folk tune)

Psalms 38 and 130 used to be popular especially because of their melodies – hence my familiarity as a child with Psalm 130. Both are sung to folk hymn tunes called *Liederwysies*, home-grown tunes of uncertain origin, stemming from the 19th century. The Afrikaner people believed that the Voortrekkers sang them, therefore they are often also (wrongly) denoted as Voortrekker tunes. They are typical folk tunes – decorated with many melismas, jumps and leaps, and often have phrases that are repeated. These

¹⁴ Volk: *nation* in a narrower sense.

tunes were sung by unassuming pioneers who were restrained in their life and faith, but who found in these tunes a “legitimate” way of expressing exuberant joy or intense sadness. These tunes were not included in the first two official hymnals (1944 and 1978) as they were regarded as being inferior (Cillié 1993). The folk hymn tunes for Psalms 38 and 130 are still very popular. In some Afrikaans-speaking churches, especially in certain more conservative churches or congregations (where you could still sense a “civil religion” of some sort), they are without doubt also sung to some extent because of their patriotic value. In singing these psalms to their folk hymn tunes the connection with the Voortrekkers is confirmed: the deeds, as well as the faith of the forebears are remembered and are re-established.

AFRIKANER IDENTITY AND THE METRICAL PSALMS

It is not accidental that the most popular “hymns” that were and are sung on the Day of the Covenant are metrical psalms. Although the singing of hymns other than the metrical psalms is very popular in the Afrikaans churches, metrical psalmody is regarded as a defining part of the Afrikaner identity in the more fundamentalist and conservative circles. In one of the smaller Dutch Reformed Churches (*Gereformeerde Kerke*) only metrical psalms are sung (Du Plessis 1925, p 109–118; Pont 1979, p. 69) (apart from a few versifications of Scripture, i.e. biblical texts set in metre and rhyme).

As many of the Afrikaners have regarded themselves as a chosen people similar to the Israelites of the Bible, the singing of (metrical) psalms has been almost axiomatic. References to Zion, Judah and Jerusalem, and imagery of God’s judgement over the heathen nations, were applied directly, as if there were no difference between the time and situation of the psalms and the time and situation of the Afrikaner people singing them.¹⁵ Consciously or on a subconscious level, a direct line was drawn between the circumstances described in the psalms and those of the Afrikaner (Loader 1979, pp. 166–173).

¹⁵ Although my arguments in this article cover the Afrikaans-speaking people, this view of singing the psalms is not unique to the Afrikaner. Dick Watson (1999, pp. 44–45) writes as follows: “At the Reformation itself, the psalms were seen to be of particular importance, not only as individual expressions of religious experience, or as divinely inspired, or as prefigurations of the New Testament, but as clear indicators of the great divide that existed between the children of God and their enemies. The interpretation of the Genevan church as the true successor of the children of Israel is one that is invited by the ‘Argument’ prefaced to the psalms in the Genevan Bible: ‘... The wicked and the persecutors of the children of God shall see howe the hand of God is ever against them ...’”

RECENT DEVELOPMENTS - A NEW VERSIFICATION OF THE PSALTER IN AFRIKAANS

The value that is attached to the (metrical) psalms can be seen from the fact that two separate committees were appointed to compile the new Afrikaans hymnal (*Liedboek van die Kerk* 2001). One committee had to deal with metrical psalms only and another committee was appointed for hymns. The latter could deal with paraphrases of psalms or even almost literal translations, although (according to the views of most members of the Psalm Committee) these may not be called “psalms” if a single metaphor or image is amiss. The criteria that were applied by these two committees are worlds apart. There were indeed some members serving on both committees, but the different sets of criteria did not bother most of them: the metrical psalms were (and are) seen as something completely different from hymns and had to be treated differently.

I also served on both committees, but found the contradictory principles of the two committees untenable. Through scholarly articles (Kloppers 1999, 2000, 2001), seminars on the metrical psalms, and by voicing my concern at the Psalm committee, I tried to bring about a hymnological and theological discussion on these matters, especially as the “hymns” and “metrical psalms” had to be included in one hymnal. It was untenable that the one full committee never consulted with the other full committee. Members serving on both committees could speak for both, but could also be very manipulative, as they could present a more global and insider perspective than those serving on one committee only.

I questioned the principle of a so-called “reproductive” versification where every word and metaphor had to be produced literally from the Hebrew text. I also questioned the lack of a sound hermeneutical approach where the various horizons of understanding and contexts of the psalms, and the context of the people singing them in the liturgy today, are not taken into account (note also the concept of *Wirkungsgeschichte*, Gadamer 1960). I was also doubtful about the notion that all 150 psalms had to be produced anew *in one form and style* (set in metre and rhyme) and also by one poet, T T Cloete from Potchefstroom.¹⁶

The way in which my critique was met made me realise that there was more to the objections than met the eye. I realised it was not only about the protection of a “church”

¹⁶ T.T. Cloete insisted on versifying all 150 psalms and that all his versifications had to be included. Under pressure the Psalm Committee had to allow a few doublings of texts by other poets, but only after the 150 versifications of Cloete had been included.

tradition¹⁷ or the fear of breaking with what may be regarded as a “Reformed” tradition. It also was not primarily about sound theological arguments, which can be deduced from the fact that certain theologians, such as the Old Testament scholar, APB Breytenbach, would plead in scholarly theological articles for an active rethinking and reformulation of biblical metaphors within the framework of a thoroughgoing historical-critical and cultural-critical inquiry into the biblical texts, and which could even influence the translation of the Bible today (Breytenbach 1997; 2000a). However, in his church’s official paper (which is known to have many elderly and conservative readers – conservative in the religious and political sense) the same person would defend a full literal translation of the metrical psalms, without a single metaphor amiss, and even defending the word “reproductive” (Breytenbach 2000b).

Why this inconsistency in theological reasoning? Bearing in mind the *Wirkungsgeschichte* of the psalms among the Afrikaans-speaking people, and how they were, for instance, used on the Day of the Covenant, it can be suspected (note the hermeneutic of suspicion) that the discrepancy in thought could be ascribed to nationalist views (of the above-mentioned writer¹⁸, his readers, most members of the Psalm Committee and many Afrikaans-speaking church goers).

Many conservative and fundamentalist church people believe that if one deviates from singing the text literally, one deviates from a cultural or national tradition that flows directly from and even coincides with the biblical tradition. Implicitly breaking with the literal word of the psalms could therefore also mean a break with the history of the

¹⁷ The “tradition” was indeed defended with biblical-fundamentalist arguments (Reports of the Psalm Committee; Breytenbach 2000b). At a Synod meeting of one of the Dutch Reformed Churches (NG Kerk, 1998) the chairman of the Psalm Committee, retired professor Attie Barnard, also told the delegates that *all the churches of all the ages had 150 metrical Psalms in their hymnals*. This incorrect statement influenced delegates not to query the idea of a corpus of 150 *metrical* psalms.

¹⁸ At a meeting of the Presbytery of Pretoria on 7 May 2007, a delegate voiced his concern that after six years of the new hymnal and the new versification of the Psalms, very few Psalms are ever sung in the liturgy. A. P. B. Breytenbach answered that we simply should accept that the Psalms were cultural goods of old Israel and that only a few of the Psalms are appropriate to be sung in the Christian worship service. That is an interesting comment coming from the same person who defended a literal metrical versification of all 150 Psalms – to be included in a hymnal for *use* in the liturgy. My question again: Why set 150 Psalms to metre and music, if “only a few” are suitable for the Christian liturgy? What is the use of having 150 literally versified metrical Psalms set to music if they cannot be *used* in the worship service? Whom do we (pretend to) satisfy?

church and simultaneously with the history of the *volk* – note again the hermeneutic of suspicion.

It must be emphasised that these rigid, fundamentalist views are now largely outdated, but they are still the views of some of the church leaders.¹⁹ In conservative churches the leaders usually are the protectors of the tradition and the identity of a church.²⁰ They are usually responsible for the appointment of committees too, and therefore the members who are appointed on committees are not necessarily the people who are the most knowledgeable, but those who will protect the tradition – or what the church authorities regard as the appropriate tradition and identity.²¹

As my critique was met with inconsistent theological arguments, or arguments from a cultural point of view, I realised that my theological and hymnological critique was seen primarily as *cultural critique*. One argument attesting to that was that the *importance of the language tradition* was constantly mentioned – especially the argument that for the *first time* there now would be a translation directly from the Hebrew into Afrikaans. It was argued that the previous versifier, J D du Toit (Totius), kept closely to the Dutch and that his texts (in the Psalter of 1937) were not truly original. What was not mentioned in this argumentation, however, is that Du Toit was an Old Testament and Hebrew scholar who was a member of the team of translators responsible for the first translation of the Hebrew Bible into Afrikaans, whereas the new versifier, T.T. Cloete, had to depend on the exegesis of the members of the Psalm Committee and others. What is important about the argument (however unsound) that it would be a first in Afrikaans is that that it is an argument from a *cultural* or *nationalist* point of view, aimed at the promotion of an Afrikaner identity through the singing of the psalms in Afrikaans.

A significant factor is that many of the Afrikaans-speaking people who insist on singing the psalms in one specific form and style (thus in line with one specific tradition) also insist on singing the texts by J.D. du Toit (Totius). Totius was regarded as a poet of the people (*volksdigter*) *par excellence*. After the Anglo-Boer war he expressed the people's pain like no other. His writings contributed to the gathering and consolidation of the

¹⁹ For instance, at the time of writing his articles and the defence of the metrical psalms in 1999 and 2000, APB Breytenbach was a member of the General Synod Committee of the Dutch Reformed Church of Africa (Nederduitsch Hervormde Kerk).

²⁰ In conservative, male-dominated and patriarchal churches such as the Afrikaans-speaking Dutch Reformed Churches, critique from a woman – and critique in the vein in which I argued – is also not easily taken.

²¹ Scholars who had earlier voiced their critique on a literal translation, such as James A Loader (cf. article 1979), were not included on the Psalm Committee at all.

Afrikaner people and the strengthening of feelings of nationalism. He was more than a poet since he was a minister of religion in the above-mentioned church in which primarily metrical psalms are sung (Gereformeerde Kerke van Suid-Afrika). He thus was the appropriate person to versify the psalms in Afrikaans – for the Afrikaans-speaking churches, as well as for the *volk*. The singing of these psalms evokes much emotion and on occasion much patriotism. Singing the psalms, and especially the versions of the *poet of the people*, and singing them to the inherited folk hymn tunes where applicable, confirm loyalty not only to Scripture, but also to the Afrikaner people.

THE OFFICIAL HYMNALS IN THE AFRIKAANS LANGUAGE

The appearance of the first official hymnal in Afrikaans (1944) contributed much to the national identity of the Afrikaner. The *Evangelische Gezangen* (1806), the official Dutch hymnal until 1973, had been in use in South Africa since 1814. The first official hymnal in Afrikaans, the *Psalm- en Gesangboek* (1944) was compiled by a committee with members from the three Afrikaans-speaking Dutch Reformed Churches, the so-called sister churches. Apart from the 150 metrical psalms with texts by J D du Toit, the hymnal consisted mostly of translations of the *Evangelische Gezangen* (1806), which in turn consisted mostly of translations of German hymns. The German hymns included in the first Afrikaans hymnal thus came via the *Evangelische Gezangen*. Only four hymn tunes from the English sphere were included.

The lack of inclusion of English hymns may be ascribed to the strong anti-English feelings that were still alive among the Afrikaans-speaking people in 1944 – feelings resulting from the annexation of the Cape, Anglicisation (Ross 1999a, p 39–42), imperialistic language policies at various stages, and especially the Anglo-Boer war that was still remembered very well. Apart from the *historical* or *cultural-theological* influences on the making of hymnbooks (that demand the preservation and continuation of the “original tradition”), *political influences* or counteraction against certain influences are factors that may result in the shunning of the religious and cultural goods of another nation.

The hymns of Dutch origin in the first Afrikaans hymnal (1944) were not by then the contemporary Dutch hymns, but (except for a few inclusions from the so-called *Supplement* from 1866) were entirely hymns from the much older *Evangelische Gezangen* (1806) (Cillié 1982, pp. 36 and 37; Strydom 1994). The Afrikaans hymnal (1944) thus was not a true renewal of hymnody, but was primarily a renewal of the *language* of existing hymns – renewal in the form of translation from Dutch to Afrikaans. But alongside the translation of the Bible in 1933 and the metrical Psalter of

1937, the first official hymnal in Afrikaans was a proof of the adequacy of Afrikaans as a language fit for worship. It was thus an important nationalist event: it drew a people together in the singing of their faith in their own language, thereby strengthening certain (socio-religious) hymnic identities. Note also the date of appearance of the hymnal: 1944 – only four years before the National Party came into power. That is also only six years after the Symbolic Ox-wagon Trek that fuelled feelings of nationalism. As 1938 was the centenary of the Great Trek, a Symbolic Ox-wagon Trek was held with various treks proceeding from the Cape to Transvaal, all gathering at the Voortrekker Monument in Pretoria on the 16th of December 1938. The convergence of national identity and religion (and therefore also the convergence of national identity and hymnody) can be seen from the fact that, for the inauguration of the new Afrikaans hymnal in 1944, processions of churchgoers dressed in the clothing of the Voortrekkers and even small ox-wagon treks were held in many towns! In some towns a cairn was stacked in front of the church. The parallel to the biblical concept of cairn stacking, affirming Israel's covenant with God, is clear.

Most of the ideals concerning the formation of a nationalist identity had already been accomplished when the second Afrikaans hymnal appeared in 1978. It was therefore not nearly as important an event from a nationalist point of view, although true renewal in hymnody was reflected. Many hymns from other spheres, with Afrikaans texts, were included, but not many new tunes or original texts by South Africans. Unfortunately the same is true of the new hymnal, *Liedboek van die Kerk*, which appeared in 2001. Mostly translations of material from other spheres are included in the *Liedboek van die Kerk*. At a stage where many Afrikaans-speaking people feel politically, culturally and linguistically threatened, there is no doubt, however, that there are people who regard the hymnal as a cultural accomplishment and a sign of a unique identity.

The use of the full body of Genevan psalm tunes has never become part of the hymnic identity of the Afrikaner, although some Genevan tunes are popular, especially the Genevan tunes for Psalms 25, 42, 66 (118), 68, 84, 89, 103, 105, 116, 134, 138. From an early stage many of the Dutch psalms were already being sung to folk hymn tunes. In the first Afrikaans Psalter (1937) many Genevan tunes of the Dutch Psalter were replaced with newly composed tunes (although no true folk hymn tunes were included, because of the purist views mentioned earlier).

Because of the purist ideals of the committee for the hymnal of 1978, many of these new tunes in the Psalter of 1937 were substituted with the Genevan tunes (Van Wyk 1979). The absence of more “singable tunes” for the psalms, the loss of some beloved tunes, and especially the fact that the folk hymn tunes for Psalms 38 and 130 were still not included

led to a reduced use of the Psalter and a negative reception of the hymnal as a whole in many circles.

Although the singing of metrical psalms used to be important and promoted in “official” circles, what was regarded by the community as true Afrikaans hymnody are, apart from the Totius texts, the folk hymn tunes and tunes by South Africans composed at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th century. Many of these tunes are of questionable quality, but others are simply in a 19th-century idiom – shunned previously, but now valued anew as part of a cultural tradition. Pietistic hymns and hymns from the Revival Movements of the 19th century that became known through hymnals for schools, Sunday schools and family devotions, used to be very popular in the more pietistically oriented circles mentioned above. Many Afrikaans-speaking people regard these hymns as “the true Afrikaans hymnody”!

CONCLUSION

In singing and hearing these psalms and hymns in Afrikaans one can identify in some sense with the language, history and identity of a pioneering people, people who often felt threatened by their circumstances and have come to protect and close ranks against outside influences and thoughts – the negative *Laager* mentality for which they became known. Among other things, this has hampered the development of an original and contextually relevant hymnody. An overbearing demand for preservation (the overprotection of the “theological” tradition, the existing body of song, and the “national heritage”) is not conducive to true creativity and relevance.

In the past ten years the Afrikaans-speaking people have been affected by radical political and cultural changes. They also feel that the use of Afrikaans as a language is being threatened. Although one can criticise the history of its speakers, Afrikaans remains part of a people’s story. In the face of lost “identities”, disappointment in radical nationalism, and disillusionment about what the convergence of nationalism and religion brought about, new identities and new loyalties need to be formed – even a new form of religion or belief has to evolve. Hopefully this will bring about an inspired and contextually relevant hymnody in Afrikaans, contributing to the formation of positive and creative new hymnic identities.

REFERENCES

- Bauman, G. 1999. *The multicultural riddle: rethinking national, ethnic, and religious identities*. New York: Routledge.
- Benyon, J. 1988. Die Kaapkolonie 1854–1881. In: T. Cameron & S.B. Spies: *Nuwe geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika in woord en beeld*. Johannesburg: Southern, pp. 161–171.
- Bosch, D. 1984. The roots and fruits of the Afrikaner civil religion. In: J. W. Hofmeyr & W. S. Vorster (Eds), *New faces of Africa*. Pretoria: UNISA.
- Breytenbach, A. P. B. 1997. Meesternarratiewe, kontranarratiewe en kanoniserings – ‘n perspektief op sommige profetiese geskrifte. *HTS Theological Studies* 53/4, pp. 1161–1186.
- Breytenbach, A. P. B. 2000a. Belydenisvorming as kanoniserings van geloofsoortuigings. *HTS Theological Studies* 56 2/3, pp. 377–390.
- Breytenbach, A. P. B. 2000b. Letter. In *Die Hervormer* – 15 Junie 2000.
- Boucher, M. 1981. *French speakers at the Cape in the first hundred years of Dutch East India Company rule: The European background*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Brink, E.R. & Polman, B. 1998. *The Psalter Hymnal Handbook*. Grand Rapids: CRC Publications.
- Cameron, T. & Spies S. B. 1988. *Nuwe geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika in woord en beeld*. Johannesburg: Southern.
- Cillié, G. G. 1993. *Afrikaanse Liederwysies. ‘n Verdwynende kultuurskat*. Johannesburg: SAMRO.
- Cillié, G. G. 1991. Psalm 130 en sy Afrikaanse liederwysie. In: *Vir die Musiekleier* 17, pp. 8–17.
- Cillié, G. G. 1982. *Waar kom ons Afrikaanse Gesange vandaan?* Kaapstad: N G Kerk.
- Davies, H. 1970. *Worship and theology in England from Cranmer to Hooker: 1534–1603*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Deist, F. 1984. *A Concise dictionary of theological terms*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Du Plessis, J. 1925. *De Gereformeerde Kerk in wording en werking*. Paarl: Paarlse Drukkers.
- Du Toit, C. W. (ed.). *Research, identity and rationalism. Thinking about theological research in Africa*. Pretoria: Research Institute for Theology and Religion.
- Gaunt, A. 2006. Who is the greatest of them all. *The Bulletin of The Hymn Society of Great Britain and Ireland*. April 2006, 18 (2), pp. 38–41.
- Gerstner, J. N. 1991. *The thousand-generation covenant. Dutch Reformed covenant theology and group identity in colonial South Africa, 1652–1814*. Leiden: Brill.
- Hofmeyr, J. W. & Vorster W. S. (eds.) 1984. *New faces of Africa*. Pretoria: UNISA.
- Hogan, L. 1995. *From women’s experience to feminist theology*. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Kloppers, E. C. 2000. ‘n Nuwe Psalmomdigting in Afrikaans: Uitgangspunte, beleid, probleme. *HTS Theological Studies* 56/1, pp. 192–204. (A new Metrical Psalter in Afrikaans: Premises, Policy, Problems)
- Kloppers, E. C. 1999. Kerkmusiek – ‘n Beskeie bydrae? In D.J.C. Van Wyk (ed.): *Twintigste eeu Hervormde Teologie*. Pretoria: Sentik, pp. 286–300.
- Kück, C. & Kurzke, H. (Hrsg.) 2003. *Kirchenlied und nationale Identität*. Tübingen: Francke.
- Le Cordeur, B. A. 1988. Die besettings van die Kaap, 1795–1854. In T. Cameron & S.B. Spies: *Nuwe geskiedenis van Suid-Afrika in woord en beeld*. Johannesburg: Southern.

- Liebenberg, B. J. 1980. Bloedrivier en Gods Hand. *South African Historical Journal*, No. 12 (pages unknown).
- Loader, J. A. 1979. Waarom sing ons in die kerk? In J. A. Loader (ed.), *'n Nuwe lied vir die Here*. Pretoria: HAUM.
- Marx, C. 1998. *Im Zeichen des Ochsenwagens. Der radikale Afrikaner-Nationalismus in Südafrika und die Geschichte der Ossewabrandwag*. Münster: LIT.
- Moodie, T. D. D. 1975. *The rise of the Afrikanerdom. Power, apartheid, and the Afrikaner civil religion*. Los Angeles: Berkeley.
- Nipkow K.-E. 1999. Practical theology and contemporary culture – Paradigms for present and future. In F. Schweitzer & J. Van der Ven: *Practical Theology – International Perspectives*. Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, pp. 93–112.
- Pont, A. D. 1979. Die Psalmzingers. In J.A. Loader (ed.): *'n Nuwe Lied vir die Here*. Pretoria: HAUM, pp. 67–75.
- Ricoeur, P. 1981. *Hermeneutics and the human sciences*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ricoeur, P. 1978. The Critique of Religion (tr Bradley deFord 1973). In C. Reagen & D. Stewart: *The Philosophy of Paul Ricoeur. An Anthology of his work*. Boston: Beacon, pp. 213–222.
- Ross, R. 1999a. *Status and respectability in the Cape Colony, 1750–1870: A tragedy of manners*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Ross, R. 1999b. *A concise history of South Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Strydom, W. M. L. 1994. *Sing nuwe sange, nuutgebore: Liturgie en Lied*. Bloemfontein: UOVS.
- Van Wyk, D. J. C. 1979. Hervormde medewerking aan 'n Afrikaanse Psalm- en Gesangboek 1928-1978. In J.A. Loader: *'n Nuwe lied vir die Here*. Pretoria: HAUM, pp. 112–159.
- Van den Heever, G. A. 2002: Expressing the ineffable: Experiencing from within and describing from the outside. In C.W. Du Toit (ed.): *Research, identity and rationalism*. Pretoria: Research Institute for Theology and Religion.
- Watson, J.R. 1999. *The English hymn. A critical and historical study*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

JAZZ IN *DRUM*, AN AMBIGUOUS DISCOURSE: “MATSHIKEZE” AND THE SHORT STORIES IN THE 1950S

Leif Lorentzon, Stockholm University, Sweden

ABSTRACT

Jazz offered an alternative discourse to the machinery of apartheid and was a mark of urban sophistication in Sophiatown in the 1950s, and so also in *Drum*. But not in all its writings: while the editorial articles, chiefly by Todd Matshikiza, hailed jazz, the short stories represented jazz as morally treacherous. This essay discusses the ambiguous discourse of jazz in *Drum*; it explains Matshikiza's writings in a black Atlantic, but also in a para-colonial/apartheid perspective, in which the fiction partly also is viewed. Its conservative representation of jazz is, however, better understood, it is argued, in light of the socio-economic realities of South Africa, its educational system, and the oral tradition.

INTRODUCTION

Drum is something of an institution in Africa. It began in the early 1950s in South Africa as a magazine for urban black South Africans, and it spread to other parts of the continent. There was a Ghanaian edition already in the late 1950s, and soon also one in Nigeria, as well as in East Africa. And at least in South Africa it is still being published: “the beat goes on”, as its slogan runs, even if it is in a glossier package and with quite a different kind of content.

The first number of *Drum*, or *The African Drum, a magazine of Africa for Africa*, as it was initially called, appeared in March 1951. It was published in Cape Town, but moved to Johannesburg after its fourth number. It also changed editor and style. Anthony Sampson was brought out from England by Jim Bailey, the publisher and owner of the magazine for over 30 years.

Very soon music had a prominent place in *Drum*. It was not traditional music, but American-influenced popular music and in particular jazz. Todd Matshikiza was the

magazine's eminent musical critic, who turned "language into metaphors for the jazz figures about which he delighted writing" (Nkosi 1983, p. 9), and his singular idiomatic style was soon called "Matshikeze". Considering the whole magazine, however, there is an ambiguous quality in how jazz is represented in *Drum*. While it is hailed in the editorial writings, i.e. chiefly Matshikiza's, it is seen as treacherous and morally dangerous in the fiction. It is this ambiguity that I am concerned with here. It is also interesting from a perspective of the identity of the magazine, and perhaps also of its writers and readers; while it "was a mark of urban sophistication and social status" (Coplan 1985, p. 172) to appreciate jazz, it was apparently also seen as morally corrupting. How was this possible? Here I shall attempt to answer this question by looking at Matshikiza's writings and the short stories.

To study *Drum* and its short stories is to study a popular literature. When literature from Africa has been studied, essentially since the 1960s, it has been dominated by a binary paradigm: it has either been traditional, oral literature and folklore, or elite, modern literature, published in the West. This paradigm has notably obscured the cultural activities of the majority of people in contemporary Africa. There is an immense area of cultural production that is neither traditional nor elite – but certainly African – which the binary paradigm obscures.¹ This essay consciously avoids this binary paradigm by being a study of a local literature – a local literature as part of an urban popular culture in South Africa, during "the fabulous decade", as Lewis Nkosi called it (Nkosi 1983, p. 20).

DRUM AND THE BEGINNING

The first four numbers of *Drum* in early 1951 were quite rural and educational, with articles on traditional music, the history of Bantu peoples, farming, religion and famous men. With the move to Johannesburg and the new editor all that changed. It had to, as Africans were not buying it. Anthony Sampson remembers talking to people in Johannesburg:

"Ag, why do you dish out that stuff, man?" said a man with golliwog hair in a floppy American suit, at the Bantu Men's Social Centre. "Tribal music! Tribal history! Chiefs! Give us jazz and film stars, man! We want Duke Ellington, Satchmo and hot dames! Yes, brother, anything American. You can cut out this junk about kraals and folk tales and Basutos in blankets – forget it! You're just trying to keep us backward, that's what! Tell us what's happening right here, man, on the Reef!" (Sampson 1983, p. 20).

¹ For a discussion of this see Barber 1987, pp. 1–78, 105–132, and Barber 1997, pp. 1–12.

Sampson and Bailey decided to change the magazine drastically and give the readers exactly what this gentleman desired. And they were successful. From a circulation of only twenty thousand, it soon was up to thirty-five thousand and later in the 1950s sold seventy thousand copies of each number. It also swelled in size – from fifty to more than eighty pages. But it was the content that made the difference; it depicted the experience of living in black townships. The magazine came to include lots of boxing, jazz, features on the local *tsotsi* gangsters, prison life, shebeen bars, comic strips such as “Don Powers”, a boxer, and “Mark Hunt” a black detective – and cover girls. It became a magazine by men and for men: “*Drum* was aggressively, even callously masculinist” (Chapman 1996, p. 239).²

Its legacy from the fifties rests more on its journalism than the fiction, on the investigative features by such journalists as Casey Motsitsi, Arthur Maimane, Can Themba and Henry Nxumalo. The latter was known as “Mr Drum”, and in the March number of 1954 he wrote *Drum*’s perhaps most famous journalistic piece: “Mr Drum Goes to Jail”, having allowed himself to be arrested after curfew without a pass. Nxumalo wrote several such articles, yet *Drum* was not “a revolutionary voice, but appealed to authority in the name of civilised values and better race relations” (Chapman 1989, p. 194). Nowhere was this more evident than in Henry Nxumalo’s writing – until he was murdered by gangsters one night in December 1956.

SOPHIATOWN

The townships of South Africa were not very safe after dark even in those days. This made Sophiatown no less intriguing for young men and women eager for the fast life. “Of all the African townships on the Reef, the most lively, important and sophisticated was Sophiatown” (Sampson 1983, p. 179). “Sophiatown in the fifties offered unprecedented possibilities for blacks to choose and invent their society from the novel distraction of urban life [...] open to a variety of interpretations, dreams, commitments, and methods of survival” (Gready 2002, p. 144). Many have testified to the vitality and also the dangers of Sophiatown in the fifties.

The area was named after the wife of the investor, H. Tobiansky, who bought the land in 1897. He failed to turn it into a government location for black people, and instead it became the largest suburban black residential area in South Africa, with neighbouring townships, collectively called the Western Native Areas. The government did nothing to

² See also Driver 2002, p. 156: “Not only was *Drum*’s so-called ‘vibrancy’ constructed at women’s expense, but the magazine’s shift from rural ‘past’ to urban ‘present’ was negotiated largely by means of belittling and damaging misrepresentations of women.”

curb the growth of the black population and in Sophiatown it rose from twelve thousand in 1930 to forty thousand by 1950. It all ended with the “Western Areas Resettlement Act” in 1953. The plan was to evacuate all black families and build a white residential area. This succeeded, even if the last black residents did not leave until October 1959. Today this Sophiatown is but a memory, a sleepy suburb. In the fifties, however, “it was a black heaven glowing with sparks of hell, in which the best and the worst of black urban life were bedfellows” (Gready 2002, p. 145). Even if it is easy to romanticise it today, largely because all the talent, the creativity that clearly came out of it, it was a slum. There were at least a couple of murders a week, and people were crammed in their apartments. Yet, this is what Nadine Gordimer has to say:

It was a slum. But look at the slums we have now: look at the squatters of Alexandra and Soweto. Look at the vast rural dumping grounds of ‘resettlement’ areas such as Botshabelo. Among them there isn’t a sense of community, a sense of fun and survival. Hogarthian though it may have been, it was there in Sophiatown. But then people were truly urban because they lived close to town, they lived in the town (in Nicol 1991, p. 231).

SOPHIATOWN AND JAZZ

In this town there was also plenty of music. Music historians have pointed to the *marabi* music of the 1920s and the later kwela and penny whistle music on the streets that in the fifties merged with the ballroom bands to turn into a distinctively South African jazz, which since then has spread all over the world. Before the fifties few African jazz musicians, however, brought anything identifiably African to their American swing, in spite of being black. Africans were “held in thrall by American culture – but above all by the activities and achievements of blacks in that society. Where American culture fascinated, *black* American culture infatuated” (Ballantine 1993, p. 13).

From this remark and that from the gentleman rejecting the first issues of *Drum*, it appears that the popular culture of urban South Africa in the first half of the 20th century can be understood as part of a black Atlantic culture. When Paul Gilroy wrote his book *The Black Atlantic*, it was in an effort to avoid a Eurocentric, as well as a black nationalistic, perspective and to offer a black counterculture to modernity, an “explicitly transnational and intercultural perspective” (Gilroy 1993, p. 15). That such a view is pertinent for South African popular culture seems to me evident. Not the least because Gilroy sees music as central to his concept: “The musics of the black Atlantic world were the primary expressions of cultural distinctiveness which this population [UK blacks] seized upon and adapted to its new circumstances” (Gilroy 1993, p. 81f). In his discussion he moves from The Jubilee Singers, who had crossed the Atlantic to visit

South Africa already in the late 19th century, to Jimi Hendrix, who also crossed the Atlantic to triumph in Europe in the 1960s. Supporting his notion of the circulation and mutation of music across the black Atlantic, arguing against a one-way cultural journey, Gilroy mentions “the mutation of jazz and African-American cultural style in the townships of South Africa” (Gilroy 1993, p. 199).

That music in South Africa was so heavily influenced by American popular culture had to do with its spread in the first decades of the 20th century among some mission schools throughout the country. This was chiefly a result of US-connected mission churches’ popularisation of American spirituals and the visiting jubilee groups from the 1890s on. This later resulted in jazz as a “space of self-representation achieved through the transmigration of both music and discourse across the black Atlantic” (Titlestad 2004, p. 34). In his book on jazz in South African literature, Michael Titlestad wonders whether we ought to denigrate jazz in the fifties as politically unimportant or elevate it as a carnivalesque contrary to the prevailing apartheid order (Titlestad 2004, p. 43). The same question I believe can be put about *Drum* and its representation of jazz. Titlestad does so himself to a certain degree when he considers two stories by Can Themba and their depiction of music. By focusing more on the use of music in the short stories of *Drum*, next to Matshikiza’s writings, I hope to enlarge the picture and find possible explanations as to why there was such an ambiguous attitude to jazz in *Drum*.

JAZZ AND *DRUM*

During “the fabulous decade” jazz in *Drum* was Todd Matshikiza. He wrote in a style that transformed the magazine and his was a singularly recognisable style. Matshikiza was a jazz musician himself and would later write the score for the all-black musical/jazz opera *King Kong*, which also played outside South Africa. Many claim that it was his writing, when he joined the staff of *Drum* in 1952, which gave *Drum* its upbeat tempo, that it was his writing that influenced the other young journalists. Matshikiza attacked the typewriter as if it was a piano or a saxophone, as many of his friends would later recount (Titlestad 2005, p. 214), and it could look like this:

The hall was chock-full of people. The hall was chock-full of music. It was good music from Peter Rezant and his famous Merry Blackbirds. I said to the fellow next to me, ‘What do you think of this fellow, Peter Rezant?’ The fellow next to me said, ‘Man, firs’ class.’ I crossed the floor and asked a lady, ‘What do you think of P -?’ She didn’t let me finish. ‘Firs’ class, firs’ class. Couldn’t be nothing better nowhere’ (in Nicol 1991, p. 87).

Matshikiza wrote in almost every issue of *Drum* and in the late fifties he had a regular column, "With the Lid Off". In this writing jazz was hailed as part of the urban lifestyle, as part of the black Atlantic identity – even if not consciously thought of in those terms. But black America was ever-present. The bandleaders, such as Peter Rezant, compared themselves with Duke Ellington, and the soloists with Louis Armstrong, while Kippie Moeketsi was the Charlie Parker of South Africa. This was obviously an appreciative identification. Nor was there ever in Matshikiza's writing any doubt about the positive attraction of American jazz, and he wrote several admiring biographical presentations of the great musicians from the US, such as Duke Ellington (*Drum* May, 1951), and Louis Armstrong (*Drum* January, 1953).

In his writing on the local jazz scene and its musicians, it is also evident that jazz, as a representation of black Atlantic, carries nothing but good vibrations. Here is an excerpt from an article on Isaac "Zakes" Nkosi:

In the good old days, when bands led funerals to the graveyards, 'Zig Zag Zakes' was there. When street parades were no parades unless the band was there, or church bazaars without the dart board and the jazz band, 'Zig Zag Zakes' was there. [...] He has worked for his name. That's why people, his fans, admirers and followers named him 'Zig Zag Zakes'. His real name is Isaac Nkosi, a cute diplomat of a musician who solves jazzmen's quarrels without firing a shot (Matshikiza 1955, p. 33).

There is no subtext here, nor in the previous excerpt on Peter Rezant, suggesting jazz's latent detrimental sides, instead the opposite is true: Rezant is a hero and Zakes Nkosi's success is the result of hard work; he has earned his fame. What we have here is the jazzman as a positive role-model! This should be remembered when we look at portraits of jazz musicians in the fiction of *Drum*.

In a black Atlantic perspective jazz in "Matshikeze" is part of an alternative discourse, "a subversive alternative to the machinery of the apartheid state" (Titlestad 2005, p. 213) and the slum realities of urban black South Africa. Even if it was not a conscious "other" to apartheid, I believe it was paracolonial.

Stephanie Newell has, with reference to Karin Barber's theories on popular culture, introduced the notion of the paracolonial for that cultural process which took place alongside and beyond the logic of colonial culture and colonialism in her study of the Gold Coast/Ghana. The prefix *para-* contains an ambiguity which is ideal for describing cultural flows in colonial West Africa, for it is beside and also beyond (Newell 2002a, pp. 29 and 44). It allows one to simultaneously acknowledge the effects of colonialism, and also to displace the Eurocentric and deterministic periodisation of culture and

history in the colonies as being pre- and/or post-colonial. I believe that it is equally ideal for describing the cultural activities in black urban South Africa in the 1950s. The point is that what went on in Sophiatown and in *Drum* was not a direct result of British or Boer culture, but more so of a black Atlantic one. Meaning was created that was not anchored to meanings in the metropolis, or to local masters. Black Africans in Sophiatown did not mimic the British or the Afrikaners, but instead the black Americans in Harlem; if anchored to any metropolis, it was to that of Harlem – perhaps the metropolis of the black Atlantic. Even if Paul Gilroy does not discuss this in such terms, it is quite apparent that for the black urban South African, Harlem was the centre of the world. And what we have here is a black Atlantic cultural flow from the diaspora back to Africa.

Jazz in urban South Africa, Matshikiza's writings and to a large extent everything that was published in *Drum* in the fifties can be understood in this para-colonial/apartheid perspective. And while "Matshikeze" represents the positive side of jazz in *Drum*, the "carnavalesque contrary" to the prevailing order, the black Atlantic, the representation of jazz is different in the fiction.

DRUM AND FICTION

In *Drum* there was a place for fiction during the fifties. Prior to this there was hardly anywhere for black South African writers to be published. The stories in *Drum* in the fifties mark the beginning of the modern black short story in South Africa (Chapman 1989, p. 183). But like so much else, it all ended before the decade was over: the last short story was Alex la Guma's "Battle for Honour" in November 1958. This was a time when the urban music scene was slowly being shattered by the Group Areas Acts of the 1950s, which destroyed the racially mixed neighbourhoods with the forced removal of black communities; many musicians went into exile, as did the writers; 1960 was also the year of the Sharpeville massacre.

In the fifties, however, black fiction had a place in *Drum*. It was different from the little that had been published before: "fast-talking, city-slick [...] crowded with the demands of identity-making, survival techniques, and community necessity at the cutting edge of the urban experience" (Chapman 1996, p. 237). Here many writers that later would become famous began their writing careers, such as Bloke Modisane, Can Themba, Arthur Mogale, Richard Rive, Lewis Nkosi, and Ezekiel Mphahlele. Their short stories were urban, not seldom about boxing, crime, love, while Mogale ran two Americanised detective serials.

Even if *Drum* also serialised novels – *Cry, the Beloved Country*, in the first seven issues, and Peter Abrahams's first two novels, *Wild Conquest* (May 1952–January 1953) and *Tell Freedom* (April 1954–November 1954) – the short story became its most prolific genre. Michael Chapman has shown how almost all writers came to use the form, from Dan Jacobson and Nadine Gordimer to the writers of *Drum*.

The language of choice was never an issue – as it is today among African writers on the continent, but perhaps more so in the diaspora. English was the obvious choice, not least because the writers came from various language groups, and some, such as Can Themba, claimed to speak no African languages. Instead they turned it into an English mixed with “literary reference, Americanism and tsotsi-taal, a polyglot gangster slang” (Chapman 1996, p. 239). The style was not very different from the journalistic writings of *Drum*. This is from an article on Kort Boy:

The name ‘Kort Boy’ has become a legend on the Reef. It spelled terror and ruthlessness, arrogance and cunning. For ‘Kort Boy’ Mbalweni, five-foot-nothing, was one of the two strongmen of Sophiatown’s notorious Americans. And people thought that he was beyond the law, that no charge could be made to stick on him – until last year he was sentenced to eighteen years’ hard labour for murder, commuted from the death sentence. Now he is in Pretoria Central Gaol. Kort Boy’s story is the old, old story of the man who turns to crime and thinks he can get away with it. And the end of that story is always the same ... (Drum October 1954, in Nicol 1991, p. 42).

One can compare this with something from Arthur Mogale’s detective stories, which, even if trying to be witty and smart, is not that far from the beginning of the Kort Boy story:

This time Durban isn’t going to be fun to me. If there will be any fun, it will be dangerous fun. I reckon you must be wondering what I’m doing here when last time you heard from me I was doing compulsory labour on some prison farm? It’s simple. Though the police don’t love me, they need me. Cos I have brains. I reckon I was the only guy with brains to ever join the Force – and have brains enough to leave it in time (Mogale 1953).

Mogale’s detective fiction is not representative of all the stories, and when Mphahlele became fiction editor, the writing changed to more serious stuff, as he objected to the lack of “serious African responsibility” found on the pages of *Drum* (Chapman 1996, p. 240).³ He was and has been critical of much of the fiction published in *Drum*. Yet

³ This is also apparent in his partly fictitious autobiographical novel, *The Wanderers*, on his times as editor for *Drum*; see Mphahlele 1971.

there is, to quote Chapman, “an extratextual dimension of significance” to this popular literature that only has grown with the years (Chapman 1996, p. 184).

THE SHORT STORIES AND JAZZ

In his collection of short fiction from *Drum*, *The Drum Decade*, Michael Chapman has opted for stories that contain fictional characters and situations, and comes up with 94 in all. They are also the stories that the magazine itself presented as short fiction, so I will of course follow Chapman’s and *Drum*’s lead. Of the 94 stories there are 29, about a third, excluding the ones coming from outside of South Africa, that contain references to music.⁴

The presence of music in the stories varies from occurring only in the imagery to dominating the story. If one looks at what kind of music it is that appears in the stories, one sees the following: traditional African music in four; political songs in three; religious, Christian hymns in two; Western art music in one; jazz in eighteen. That jazz dominates is not surprising, considering the transformation of the magazine from a rural to an urban outlook, and the fixation with black America among urban popular arts in South Africa.

The first story, “Rhodesia Road,” by Alfred Mdeba (March 1951) is about two young men lost in a city. Frightened, they return to their village, after also having encountered modern music in a bar:

The tinkling sound of mingoli, dancers colliding with each other, the drums saying gudu-gudu, the mixed throng of all the tribes arrayed in every sort of style, moving on uncertain feet. Our travellers gazed speechless! [They saw] women with clothing awry and loose round their breasts, [...] two men struggling together, crashing blows at each other. Then one took the other’s fist right in the eyes. Shower of stars! And he was down. He lay like dead (Mdeba 1951, in Chapman 1989, p. 8).

It is quite clear that the music of the beer-shop is associated with the dangers of the city, and the young men return to their working quarters. The next morning they are cattle-herding and singing other kinds of songs themselves, traditional songs that “turned their thoughts towards home so that they threw up their work and set off back to the village ...” (Mdeba 1951, in Chapman 1989, p. 9), as the story ends.

⁴ Five short stories were missing in the library at the University of Cape Town, where I collected them in November 2004, stories I have therefore not read. They are, using Chapman’s numbering from *The ‘Drum’ Decade*, pp. 239–241, numbers 5, 67, 69, 71 and 87.

Already in Bloke Modisane's "The Dignity of Begging" from the September issue of the same year, there is a new style: "racy, agitated, cynically amused by its own urban air" (Chapman 1989, p. 201), and when music appears, it is of course jazz, if only in a simile: "with a brilliance that sets my heart pounding like the bass of a boogie woogie" (Modisane 1951, in Chapman 1989, p. 10). The attraction of the city changes; it becomes a love affair – or perhaps a love-and-hate relationship. If nothing else, the city is from now on the milieu of the stories. Jazz music, however, remarkably maintains the sentiments of that first story, where it signifies moral hazard.

When other music is represented, it circuitously denounces the urban lifestyles that jazz is associated with in other stories, and in the rest of the magazine, in promoting a conservative, if not Victorian, morality. The two stories with Christian hymns are from the first year of *Drum*. In both there is an evident Christian leaning that one simply does not find in the later stories of that decade. Both stories are in a rural setting and the music emphasises the importance of the (Western) nuclear family and Christian values, values that we shall find jazz and swing music will threaten in later urban stories.

Richard Rive's "African Song" is unique in that it is the only story with political songs. The protagonist attends a political meeting while the police are approaching. He has left the village for Cape Town, finding comfort in numbers and the cause and the singing, even if he may end up in prison. It is also the only story where music, here as political manifestation, has positive suggestions in an urban setting in the fiction of *Drum* in the fifties – jazz never does. The reader is certainly meant to sympathise with Muti when the story ends: "And then, as the blue uniforms stood before him, the last triumphant note. *Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrica!*" (Rive 1956 in Chapman 1989, p. 120).⁵

Michael Titlestad has shown how, in two of the eighteen stories with jazz, it is "part of an unravelling fabric of social and moral responsibility, [and both stories] conjecture the fatal consequences of a moral abandon expressed in a commitment to jazz" (Titlestad 2004, p. 45). There are other stories where the same sentiments are as prominent. In one, "Loving Two Men", by E. E. N. Mkize, Nontando is the piano player in James Jali's jazz and swing dance band. She is happily married, but falls in love with the band leader and is prepared to leave her husband. He grants her the divorce, but kisses her passionately one last time. And: "Nontando stood, thunderstruck, gazing after him. Now she could have her divorce and it was only now that she knew that she loved her husband, loved him deeply as she could never love another man. Oh, why hadn't he kissed her like that before" (Mkize 1953, p. 44). While she is pondering her misfortune,

⁵ This is, of course, the national anthem of today's South Africa, while in the 1950s it was the ANC's anthem, and later banned by the government.

the husband returns and it all ends very happily, but not for the band leader. He threatened their happiness, the nuclear family, and was punished. The music, the jazz of “James Jali’s famous band”, is here connected with that threat to the family.

Kenneth Mtetwa tells in “His Only Love” of how the college boy Hurricane travels to the city to see his girlfriend. They are finally united after some misunderstandings, but the city where this takes place is a world where drunkards stagger and fall flat on their faces, and not even the police care, and nobody takes notice of a gun duel, and on the jukebox Hurricane plays Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington in a “world sunk in debauchery” (Mtetwa 1954).

The last issue from the same year, 1954, includes a story by Peter Clarke, where jazz again is associated with destructive forces. Joe is an enthusiastic body-builder who has decided to remain a virgin. To his best friend he boasts about this fact so much that the friend becomes fed up and decides to trick Joe into the arms of a “nice-time girl”. Joe manages to persuade him to come to Lydia’s Christmas party, which would be the beginning of the undoing of Joe Mkize’s virginity. Here his friend would lead “Joe the lamb, to Lydia, the wolf” (Clarke 1954, p. 53). They dance to Satchmo and Nat King Cole. Joe’s drink is spiced and he wakes up the following morning next to Lydia, “and after that ... well, nobody ever heard old Joe boast again about having nothing to do with girls” (Clarke 1954, p. 54). That jazz is here once again in liaison with the Devil seems quite clear. Together with drink and nice-time girls Joe’s strength is defeated.⁶

In the next issue of *Drum* there is yet another story where jazz is quite clearly part of damaging forces. Jacqueline is a singer in Café de Castanito, and hires some *tsotsis* to kill her boyfriend. The police are suspicious and when interrogated she makes a run for it and is hit by a car: “A scream and then a body hurled high in the air. It landed on the pavement with a sickening thud” (Manqupu 1955, in Chapman 1989, p. 71). The environment of the lady, the music she sings (her last song is “Lucifer here I come”), the club she works at and the hoodlums trying to protect her, all indicate an unhealthy environment, an environment with jazz music.

This reading of some of the stories is meant to illustrate that jazz is represented as a socially and morally dangerous element of urban life in South Africa at the time. The jazz musicians threaten the nuclear family and are certainly not positive role models, as in Todd Matshikiza’s jazz portrait of Zakes Nkosi. There is a clear ambiguity in the

⁶ It must be mentioned here that the way women are treated in African popular culture, chiefly as good-time girls, is a matter of great concern, and has also been interrogated. Look, for instance, at Section 4 in Barber 1997, Stephanie Newell’s “Introduction” (2002b) and the article (already mentioned) by Dorothy Driver in Newell 2002.

magazine's attitude to jazz when one compares the short stories with the editorial writings of Matshikiza, who elevates jazz to the level of urban sophistication.

If this ambiguity of jazz in *Drum* as a whole is puzzling, it is so even more in the figure of Can Themba. When Titlestad looks at two stories by Can Themba, "The Nice Time Girl" and "Martha", he finds, as we have seen, that both place "jazz on the side of excess, desirous abandon and, consequently, suffering" (Titlestad 2004, p. 44). In the first story Eunice Maoela is married to an older teacher, Theophilus [significant name!], who is mostly away teaching in a faraway post, a husband who is far too cold for her, the narrator reveals. Eunice starts partying and is seduced by "a Johannesburg jive sheik". She hires some thugs who kill her husband, but when interrogated by the police, she admits her role in the affair.

The process that finished both Eunice and Theophilus began with jazz. Themba apparently wants the reader to feel pity for Theophilus, even if he is a bore, and contempt for Eunice. This is from a writer who "wallowed in township life: the shebeens, the shebeen queens, the good-time girls, the singers, the gangsters, [who] saw in Sophiatown a celebration of life, a magnificent defiance against the forces of oppression, a vitality, a demand for existence which triumphed over the degrading slum" (Nicol 1991, p. 175). He has been criticised for romanticising the same township in some of his writings – although clearly not in this story – while himself drinking so heavily that he was finally sacked in 1962. Themba also wrote reports on gangster terror, the illegal liquor trade and the destruction of Sophiatown. Perhaps some of what he saw enticed him to lace his short fiction with conservative values? Or did he see the fiction as more serious, expecting it to survive longer than his journalistic writing, and therefore felt inclined to "teach"?

LITERARY JAZZ AND MORALITY

It is difficult to answer Titlestad's question whether jazz represents a carnivalesque dissonance to the prevailing order or is void of political significance in *Drum* as a whole. In the short stories, however, we have found little politics. As Titlestad remarks and I have shown above, jazz is more often loaded with conservative morals in the stories – which, of course, could be understood as having political import, i.e. advocating conservative, traditional values rather than a black Atlantic modernity, challenging the political system of the day.

That jazz in *Drum* as a whole, rather than simply in the short fiction, is something of an enigma may have to do with the political ambiguity of jazz and popular culture in South Africa at the time. There was no class struggle in South Africa; there were many classes,

but no distinct class cultures, therefore no class struggle. The struggle was instead racial. The black petty bourgeoisie, for instance, aligned themselves with the black lower classes, emphasising racial commonality instead of class commonality. So the complexity of the politics of popular culture was connected with the relationship between class and culture in the whole of South Africa. Christopher Ballantine writes that the “jazzing” subculture played out “contradictory and overlapping strategies and inclinations of urban blacks: at once conciliatory, at another oppositional; now conservative, then radical” (Ballantine 1993, p. 11). *Drum* is a good illustration of this; the editorial writings, chiefly Matshikiza’s, would stand for the oppositional and radical, while the short stories are conciliatory and conservative. On the same page however, Ballantine writes that jazz came to represent “the hopes and aspirations of the most deeply urbanised sectors of the African working class” (Ballantine 1993, p. 11). This is evident in Matshikiza’s writings; as part of the staff of *Drum* he would belong to the most urbanised sector of South Africa, albeit not being working class.

This was, however, not always the case with the writers who submitted short stories; while certainly not working class, they were seldom as urbanised but often teachers and rather well educated. Most black writers in Africa, also in South Africa, had gone to schools that were either run by missions or the curriculum was built on a very evident Christian ethic. In these schools they were expected to learn from printed texts. In most parts of Africa the didacticism of fiction is explained in part by the social realities, which simply did not allow art-for-art’s sake. There is also a tradition in oral literature of purposeful story telling. Almost all African orature is functional and entertaining. African orature has a long tradition and one reason for its being remembered and retold through generations is that it is also informational: it asserts “facts” about myth and history, about the environment in etiological tales and riddles. It may also be didactic, as in proverbs and riddles, but particularly in fables told by the elders to children.

Here then are three aspects that have influenced writers in all of Africa to write functional literature, a literature that does not only entertain but also teaches: the socio-economic realities of Africa, the tradition of orature, and the Christian-dominated educational system. Of the three, the first is certainly pertinent also to South Africa, particularly during apartheid. Of course, South Africa also has a long tradition of oral literature that may have influenced writers, also the ones published in *Drum*. Judging by the fate of Thomas Mofolo’s *Chaka*, the school system in South Africa was dominated by

Christian ethics.⁷ To this one can add the fact that modern music was banned from music classes all over South Africa; music education was dominated by Western art music and Orff instruments. Even if the staff of *Drum* were not influenced by all of these factors, the writers submitting their fiction may have been. With this in mind, it is perhaps not so surprising to find a conservative, almost Victorian moral in the stories, and that music is found to support this morality.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The paracolonial perspective may cast another light on this issue. Obviously *Drum* was a consequence of the European presence in South Africa, in particular the British, hence the use of English. The Afrikaners also affected *Drum*, if nothing else its content, since they dictated the insane politics of the day. But *Drum* was not a direct result of British culture or the apartheid system, which is why I believe one can understand it as a para-colonial/apartheid cultural phenomenon.

Drum did not mimic the Europeans in South Africa. The short story writers used and mixed discourses from the centre, but also, and more so, from local, indigenous cultural spheres. The system in which the writers and journalists were trying to gain prestige was not the British or the Boer one, but rather the local and, at least in Matshikiza's case, the urban system. Nor was it national, but para-colonial/apartheid, and at least in Matshikiza's case also black Atlantic. As I have already mentioned, urban black South Africans were mesmerised by black America, or "anything American," as the critical reader of the first numbers of *Drum* exclaimed. There was even hope that Johannesburg would one day develop a Harlem of its own comparable with New York's. "These exhortations and emulations were based on the confident assertion of a racial and cultural identity between blacks in South Africa and those in the United States" (Ballantine 1993, p. 15).

It may seem that a black Atlantic outlook would not allow a conservative representation of jazz, and the black Atlantic presence is not as evident in the stories, as it is in "Matshikeze". But South Africans were not only enthralled by jazz from Harlem, but also by the black civil rights movement in America. Graduates of missions schools who were denied entry to colleges in South Africa went to the United States and returned with first-hand knowledge of African American politics. Coplan writes that "contact with Afro-America fostered a racial self-respect that became a basis for non-violent struggle

⁷ Thomas Mofolo wrote *Chaka* in 1906, but it was not published until 1925. The missionary press did not approve of the novel's benevolent approach towards African traditional beliefs, in spite of the fact that Chaka himself was depicted as a despot.

against a society determined to crush African aspiration" (Coplan 1985, p. 70). With this I simply wish to indicate that Can Themba and Todd Matshikiza and the writers of fiction in *Drum* were not only fascinated by Louis Armstrong and Duke Ellington, but perhaps also by thinkers such as Frederick Douglass and W. E. B. Du Bois.⁸ In the light of that, a black Atlantic perspective may also harbour a conservative ethics.

That jazz was also used to support such an ethic is surprising in the light of the rest of the magazine, where it is such a fundamental part of the magazine's and Sophiatown's urban black Atlantic identity, particularly as expressed in Matshikiza's writings. While "Matshikeze" jazz is best understood in the light of the black Atlantic, the representation of jazz in the short stories – while it may be characterised as para-colonial/apartheid, just as "Matshikeze" can – does not seem to be as strongly part of a black Atlantic discourse. Here I have tried to elucidate this phenomenon, this ambiguity, by focusing on jazz in "Matshikeze" and in the fiction, and suggesting some possible reasons for the ambiguous discourse of jazz in *Drum* in the 1950s.

REFERENCES

- Ballantine, C. 1993. *Marabi nights: Early South African jazz and vaudeville*. Johannesburg: Raven Press.
- Barber, K. 1997 Introduction. In K. Barber (ed.): *Readings in African popular culture*. Oxford: James Currey, pp. 1–11.
- Barber, K. 1987. Popular arts in Africa. *African Studies Review* 30 (3), pp. 1–78, 105–32.
- Chapman, M. 1989. *The Drum decade, stories from the 1950s*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Natal Press.
- Chapman, M. 1996. *Southern African literature*. London & New York: Longman.
- Clarke, P. 1954. Muscle man's girl! *Drum*, December, pp. 52–54.
- Coplan, D. B. 1985. *In township tonight! South Africa's black city music and theatre*. London & New York: Longman.
- Driver, D. 2002. Drum Magazine (1951–9) & the spatial configurations of gender. In S. Newell (ed.): *Readings in African popular fiction*. Oxford: James Currey, pp. 156–59.
- Gilroy, P. 1993. *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and double consciousness*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.
- Gready, P. 2002. The Sophiatown writers of the fifties. In S. Newell (ed.): *Readings in African popular fiction*. Oxford: James Currey, pp. 144–55.
- Manqupu, M. 1955. Love comes deadly! *Drum*, January, in M. Chapman 1989, pp. 66–72.

⁸ Frederick Douglass (1818–1895) was a liberated slave who became one of the great leaders of the abolitionist movement in the US. Du Bois (1868–1963) was a founding member of the NAACP, and the first African American to get a PhD from Harvard; he ended his days as a naturalised citizen in Ghana.

- Matshikiza, T. 1955. Zig zag man and his jazz. *Drum*, May, p. 33.
- Mdeba, A. 1951. Rhodesia Road. *Drum*, March, in M. Chapman 1989, pp. 1–9.
- Mkize, E. E. N. 1953. Loving two men. *Drum*, June, pp. 22–23, 44.
- Modisane, B. 1951. The dignity of begging. *Drum*, September. In M. Chapman 1989, pp. 10–17.
- Mogale, A. 1953. Hot diamonds. *Drum*, April.
- Mphahlele, E. 1971. *The wanderers*. New York: Macmillan.
- Mtsetwa, K. 1954. His only love. *Drum*, April.
- Newell, S. 2002a. *Literary culture in colonial Ghana*. Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Newell, S. (ed.) 2002b. *Readings in African popular fiction*. Oxford: James Currey.
- Nicol, M. 1991. *A good-looking corpse: The world of Drum – Jazz and gangsters, hope and defiance in the townships of South Africa*. London: Secker and Warburg.
- Nkosi, L. 1983. *Home and exile, and other selections*. London & New York: Longman (1965).
- Rive, R. 1956. African Song. *Drum*, June, in M. Chapman 1989, pp. 114–120.
- Sampson, A. 1983. *Drum, an African adventure – and afterwards*. London: Hodder and Stoughton (1956).
- Titlestad, M. 2005. Jazz discourse and black South African modernity, with special reference to “Matshikese”. *American Ethnologist*, 32 (2), pp. 210–221.
- Titlestad, M. 2004. *Making the changes: Jazz in South African literature and reportage*. Pretoria: University of South Africa Press.

FACILITATING THE FORMATION OF PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL IDENTITIES OF ARTS AND CULTURE EDUCATORS

Maria Smit, University of Stellenbosch, South Africa

ABSTRACT

This essay reports on a research project undertaken in the Western Cape, South Africa, in which I as the researcher document my own observations and those of the Arts and Culture educators participating in the project. The project focuses on how these educators can enhance their personal and professional identities through teaching the arts, by improving their practical skills in, and knowledge of, the art forms, as well as their self-reflexive skills in the everyday practice of their classrooms. Several qualitative research methods are used such as (i) theory-building studies such as those based on the concept of grounded theory in which different types of empirical data serve as evidence for the underlying theory being built, and (ii) empowerment evaluation as proposed by Fetterman (2001). The essay discusses several tentative categories to be included in the theoretical framework; these categories are derived from important issues that the participating educators raise and with which they grapple.

INTRODUCTION

At the moment I am undertaking a research project which will hopefully be useful on a theoretical, as well as a practical level. I facilitate a fully-fledged, two-year, part-time in-service training course (Advanced Certificate in Education, or ACE), presented at the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa, for educators teaching in the Arts and Culture learning area of the General Education and Training band of the National Curriculum (Grades R-9).

The project firstly concerns, on a practical level, the improvement of the skills and knowledge of Arts and Culture educators, as part of the process they undergo in the ACE course. In South Africa the majority of educators who have to teach the Arts and Culture learning area are not trained in all four of the components, namely, Music, Drama, Dance and Visual Arts. Some are trained in only one or two of these

components, and many are not trained in any of them at all. This creates an overwhelming feeling of inadequacy, which also has a negative impact on the learners and on the future of the learning area. Because there is a vast international literature on the usefulness of music for the development of personal identity, and because it is a worldwide phenomenon that music is often a neglected area within the formal education system, I believe that it is worthwhile to address the personal and professional development of Arts and Culture educators in South Africa. Hopefully, something positive may result from this project, so that learners can, in turn, reap the benefits of training in music and the arts for their own personal enrichment.

Several authors have investigated the development of professional identity in music teachers in other countries (e.g. Roberts 1991; Cox 1997; Bouij 1997; Beynon 1998; Olsson 2002, 2003; and Woodford 2002). Roberts and Bouij used grounded theory in their research. However, such studies within the realm of teacher education in the field of music and arts have never been done in South Africa. One South African project, funded by SIDA and documented by Soodyall (n.d.) and Yacoob (n.d.), in which action research was undertaken by music teachers in the KwaZulu-Natal area, focused on developing reflective thinking skills in the teachers. It is therefore linked to my current project, but is less comprehensive.

The educators participating in the ACE course are involved as “co-researchers” in my research project, because they have to carry out observations in their everyday school situations about their own skills, attitudes and teaching methods. They also have to observe the learners’ progress and their reactions, and write reports on all these aspects. They also share their findings with other educators in focus group discussions. In the process they are developing their own philosophies of arts education, situated within the contexts in which they teach. All this forms part of the goal to enhance the critical thinking skills of the educators, which in its turn should empower them to improve their teaching, and help the formation of sound personal and professional identities.

A team of at least ten part-time lecturers present the ACE course, which ranges from curriculum studies (including lesson and assessment planning, meaningful use of resources, and assignments such as self-reflection on the progress made in the teaching itself), the acquisition of practical music skills (including learning of staff notation, keyboard playing, singing skills, the use of Orff instruments and drumming in the class, as well as dancing) to visual arts and drama skills. The course is presented during holidays and on certain Saturdays during the terms, totalling 25 full days of contact tuition per year. Between the contact sessions, educators have to perform small action research projects in their schools, which are assessed and serve as data for my research project. These findings are shared by the 16 enrolled educators in the in-service

programme to encourage the development of their critical thinking skills, and their own philosophies of arts education situated within the contexts in which they teach. The educators also have to work on assignments of a more philosophical nature, and formulate their own view on the teaching in this learning area, and reasons why this area is important.

Data on all these activities are collected in the form of observations, questionnaires, focus group discussions, unstructured interviews and written reports, and serve as empirical “evidence” in the theory-building study, which takes place on a deeper, theoretical level of my current research project. I am combining the more practical training of the educators with a theory-building study in order to set out some guidelines for what is needed in the in-service training of the Arts and Culture educators in the Western Cape, South Africa. This type of research can be categorised as “empowerment evaluation”, where I, as facilitator of the ACE course, do the theorising, reflect on the usefulness of the data obtained, and investigate possible theoretical approaches which might shed light on the implementation and evaluation of such in-service programmes, possibly nationwide in South Africa. I believe the situation in the Western Cape is fairly representative of South Africa as a whole, and therefore hope to contribute to in-service training of Arts and Culture educators on a broader level.

The entire project is also of interest to a broader theme of “Music and Identity”, because I would like to determine whether the acquisition of skills in music and other art forms could enhance the personal and professional identity of educators who have not been formally trained in these art forms.

In what follows, a first section will highlight the various research methods used in this research project. During the presentation of the ACE course so far, and in doing the set assignments, some important issues came up among the educators which can be used as “categories” in the theory-to-be-built. Only five tentative categories will be discussed in the following sections, namely: i) the knowledge of the educators; (ii) skill development; (iii) self-reflection; (iv) motivation, and (v) critical thinking.

RESEARCH METHODS

Several research methods are used to obtain data and build the theoretical framework. The concept of theory building used here is based on the notion of grounded theory, as presented by Anselm Strauss and Juliet Corbin (1989). According to Darkenwald (1980, pp. 67–68), such a grounded theory is “discursively developed in narrative form as categories, and their relationships are defined, elaborated, and illustrated by the data (for example, incidents from field reports) used to generate them.” This means that different

ways of data collecting help to shape the theory underlying the framework which I call “Empowerment training for Arts and Culture educators”.

Even though grounded theory was first propagated by Glaser and Strauss (1967), a clear distinction between two types of grounded theory is nowadays recognised (Dick, 2002), especially Glaser’s stress on the “emergence” of a theory, while Strauss has a more “conceptually descriptive approach that encourages directive questioning and supports an interpretive stance” (Duscher & Morgan, 2004). For the purposes of this study it seems that it might be fruitful to lean towards Strauss’s approach. This is because of a limited timeframe, and because of the belief that an early investigation of relevant literature might indeed enhance the “theoretical sensitivity” of the researcher (Strauss & Corbin, 1989, pp. 50–51). In addition, my pre-theoretical premise is that concepts or categories which will be of importance in the investigation might include those used by Fetterman *et al.* (1996) in their exposition of empowerment evaluation, such as skill development, problem solving, decision making, control, self-reflection and self-assessment, to name only a few.

Participatory action research methods and empowerment evaluation research methods are therefore also used. Empowerment evaluation, as described by Fetterman (2001), includes the development of critical thinking, the performance of reflective tasks and action research projects. Educators have to give feedback about the problems they encountered while teaching, and participants can discuss their problems and ideas in group sessions. Educators also have to evaluate their own progress and the efficiency of the strategies worked out during the in-service training programme. They consequently also perform empowerment evaluation of their own progress. This type of research helps people “help themselves and improve their programs using a form of self-evaluation and reflection” (Fetterman, 2001, p. 3).

Small participatory action research projects focus, for example, on teaching methods (African and Western), and on formulating a philosophy of teaching in the Arts and Culture Learning Area, as well as determining the progress made with regard to the acquisition of skills and the development of self-esteem within the learners, as well as the educators.

The advantage of making use of both the theory-building approach and the empowerment evaluation method is that they both provide the opportunity to take into account several seemingly unrelated factors when investigating phenomena and research questions in a systematic way. A framework can be developed in which positive interventions can be planned and performed. This is particularly useful when looking at the factors influencing the current situation of pre- and in-service educators in the Arts

and Culture Learning Area, so that one could devise strategies to empower the educators to be better equipped for, and more confident in, their profession. This creation of a framework is of course an ongoing project, because changes in the circumstances of educators can in their turn be incorporated into the in-service programme in the future, in the following ways: (i) by using the data obtained to formulate a philosophy for Arts and Culture teaching the Western Cape; (ii) by including the findings in the curriculum itself to empower the educators and thereby enhance their reflection-in-action; and (iii) by increasing the participating educators' awareness of their problems and strategising solutions, by using their own creative efforts and ideas.

On the theoretical level of this investigation, one has to do a thorough literature study of relevant sources such as: document analyses of curricula and reviews of curricula (e.g. Breidlid, 2003; Britz, 2002; Moore, 1994); similar studies, also in other subject fields (e.g. Cranton & Carusetta 2004; Franz, 2002; Larson, 1997; Navarro & Verdisco, 2001; Roberts, 1991; Wolfer, 1998); taking note of learning theories – the social constructivist theory in particular seems to be compatible with African thinking, according to some authors (cf. e.g. Reagan, 2000); studies investigating the possibilities for identity formation and empowerment of teachers and learners by means of music and arts education, which could result in educators seeing themselves as leaders (cf. e.g. Burnsed & Jensen, 1994; Floden *et al.*, 1995; Gardner, 1996); studies in which research methodologies compatible with African thinking are promoted (cf. e.g. Schreiber, 2000; Smith, 1999); and expositions of indigenous teaching methods and learning styles within the realm of the culture and arts (cf. e.g. Goduka, 1998; Nzewi, 2003; Sawadogo, 1995) and music education systems in different African countries (cf. e.g. Agawu, 2003; Akrofi, 2002; Flolu, 1994).

These different types of literature enable me as researcher to draw up a framework by means of which a systematic comparison can be made between different systems in a variety of fields, to interpret and analyse that which has been documented in the literature, and to ask pertinent questions with regard to the research problems which need to be solved. Concepts used by scholars are investigated and delineated, because it is clear that different scholars use the same concepts in different contexts, and therefore the meanings will differ. For example, concepts such as “indigenous knowledge” and “identity formation” have different connotations for different authors.

In building theory, however, these literature studies should always be accompanied by evidence which emerges from qualitative research on the specific phenomenon studied. The small action research projects undertaken by the educators participating in the ACE course themselves, and their learning to reflect on their own teaching and methods, and

evaluating their own progress in the field of Arts and Culture teaching, provide this necessary evidence to strengthen the underlying theory which is drawn up by me as researcher. Darkenwald (1980, p. 68) asserts that verification of the theory is necessary, and that researchers “require evidence to establish the existence of the categories that emerge”.

At the beginning of the ACE course the in-service training participants established their own goals with regard to the results that they want to obtain at the end of the programme, and identified and prioritised the activities by means of which they can obtain these results, and occasionally rate the programme and their own progress against external standards. They also stated goals and strategies for their future. Teamwork and sharing of problems, ideas and suggestions play an important role. According to Cronbach (in Fetterman, 2001, p. 6), empowerment evaluation emphasises programme development, improvement and lifelong learning in all participants.

My role as researcher is to detect any patterns and trends which emerge during these participatory action research projects, and in the feedback and the group discussions. These trends are then used to strengthen the underlying theory. It is, of course, important to remember that the phenomenon under investigation is always in a process of change, so that the theory will also not remain static. It will always be more of a process than a final product.

To bring all of these activities together into a single model which can account for all factors, one could use the one presented by Strauss and Corbin (1989, p. 163). This model includes different layers; from the lowest (individual) level to the highest (most inclusive) they are:

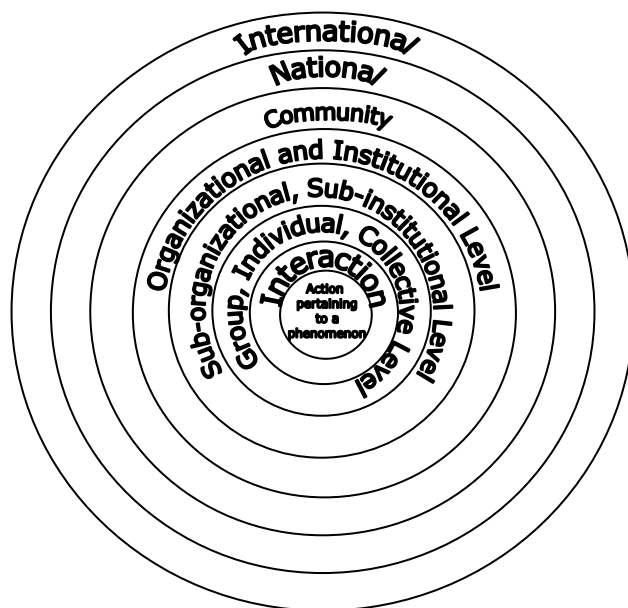


Fig. 1: Strauss and Corbin: Conditional Matrix (1989, p. 163)

1. **Action pertaining to a phenomenon:** On this level, actions are performed to “manage, respond to” a phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1989, p. 164). In the current investigation, this will entail the investigation of the educators’ actions in their teaching situation in the schools. All aspects of the current situation and the disposition of the educators could be used as basic data.
2. **Interaction:** On this level, interactional processes such as “negotiation, domination, teaching, discussion, debate, self-reflection” take place with regard to the phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1989, p. 164). For the purposes of the current investigation, this includes all the interventions needed to affect a change in the current situation of Arts and Culture educators.
3. **Group, individual and collective level:** This level includes “biographies, philosophies, knowledge, and experiences of persons and families, as well as those of various groups (special interests, professional, and scientific)” (Strauss and Corbin, 1989, p. 164). It therefore includes many types of interaction which might have an impact on the educators, their views of themselves and their situation. On this level, one could also consider the correct handling of the outcomes of the learning area in question by educators. It is also on this level that the value of the procedures used in empowerment evaluation, as described by Fetterman (2001), become evident.

4. **Sub-organisational and sub-institutional level:** This level is becoming broader, and involves structures beyond the individual, but which certainly affect him/her. Educators have to be aware of these broader structures and the way in which they are affected by them. This awareness can trigger ideas to find solutions to problems. In the current context, an example of this level of interaction can be factors influencing the team of educators who work together for the learning area in a particular school.
5. **Organisational and institutional level:** This level deals with, for example, issues regarding the organisation of the Arts and Culture Learning Area within specific schools and regions. Here also, educators' awareness and opportunity to discuss matters within the framework of the in-service training programme may help them to cope better with the situation, and to plan strategies for improving it.
6. **Community:** On this level, for example, factors of cultural and religious importance play a role. Educators have to be aware of the community (the context) in which they work, and how this community could support them in their task.
7. **National:** This level, for example, deals with issues regarding the national curriculum; therefore, analyses of policy documents have to be done on this level. It is also necessary for educators to delve into these matters, to give their opinions, and to discuss these with their colleagues. This enhances their understanding of the situation and gives them the opportunity to plan strategies to solve the problems they face.
8. **International:** On this level, for example, issues such as globalisation and its impact on individuals, groups, communities and nations are considered. Especially in arts education, for example within the field of music, formal education has to a large extent been neglecting general trends in global culture (e.g. the prominence of rock and hip-hop music), and thereby educators themselves have for many years in the past marginalised their subject within the school system. Being aware of global trends could help to improve the status of the arts subjects in the formal education system.

Individuals do not have much effect on circumstances on the outer levels, but they have to be aware of the impact of these levels on their situation and themselves as persons. Individuals can manage the inner levels more effectively, if they know how to deal with specific conditions. However, the conditions at all levels are relevant to any theory-building study. The researcher needs to fill in the specific conditions on all levels in order to appropriately describe the phenomenon and solve its particular problems. The

participating educators can help the researcher, by means of their input, to identify categories and characteristics of such categories, and in this way strengthen the theory.

CATEGORIES FOR INVESTIGATION

This section deals with five categories which have emerged clearly from the observations, focus group discussions and questionnaires to which the educators in the ACE course have been exposed during their first year of training. These are: knowledge, skill development, self-reflection, motivation and critical thinking.

KNOWLEDGE

One of the biggest problems is that the Arts and Culture educators with whom I work have hardly any background in the arts, especially in music. This is particularly the case because they are, except for one person, from historically disadvantaged communities in the Western Cape, South Africa, where during the apartheid era black and so-called “coloured” people did not have the same privileges in their education as the white population. Informally, of course, they have been exposed to certain types of music, but they lack any formal **knowledge** about music, and have no performing skills on any instrument, as it is known in the Western music education. Therefore, the above-mentioned studies dealing with music education majors and professionalisation of music teachers-in-training cannot be simply applied to the educators participating in this project. We do not deal with **musicians**, but rather with amateurs who love music and the arts, and who want to learn more about these subjects. The aim of the project is, consequently, to try to incorporate music and the acquisition of very basic performing skills, and determine whether the self-esteem and the professional identity of the educators can be enhanced. The question therefore is not whether these people consider themselves musicians, performers or “merely” music teachers, as in the other studies, but whether they consider themselves as “capable teachers of the Arts and Culture learning Area”.

The in-service programme, therefore, focuses on basic concepts used within the different arts forms, and educators have to become familiar with these concepts. Usually, contact sessions will include very practical demonstrations of these concepts. For example, concepts such as “form” in music will be demonstrated and practised through dances or playing of compositions on Orff instruments.

SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Another problem is that it takes time for people to acquire skills. Music is not a subject which deals only with knowledge (Roberts 1991, p. 32), but the practical side is its most important aspect – in line with Elliott’s (1995) plea for **praxial** music education. The contact sessions, therefore, also include, for example, drum playing, dancing (African and Western folk dancing), keyboard classes, group singing classes, and Orff instrumental tuition. The lecturers who have to offer these practical instrumental classes, are often shocked by the slow progress that many of the educators make – although it differs from person to person, those with absolutely no background and usually no instruments at home on which to practise develop very slowly. One has to realise, however, that these educators might never become excellent performers, but they may fulfil other roles.

In Bouij’s (1998) study, the role identities of the teachers are linked to personality traits, and a model is presented which might be applied to our current project. This model categorises music teachers according to whether they see themselves as professional musicians, or professional teachers, and whether they have a broad musical background or a narrow one.

I assume that the in-service educators we work with have a broad (but superficial) musical and arts background, with few skills, and therefore will have to be more geared towards seeing themselves as good teachers rather than good musicians or good artists. This will entail that one should aim towards a cultivating a pupil-centred teacher to a great extent, and less a content-centred teacher (the latter referring to specialised teachers with specialised training). This will concur with the type of group teaching in which our educators are involved within the Arts and Culture learning area. This also means that the educators themselves have to be aware of where they are on the continuum of “broad musical comprehensiveness” to “narrow musical comprehensiveness”, as well as on the axes between “performer” and “all-round musician”, and “content-centred teacher” and “pupil-centred teacher”. They should be able to place themselves, and feel comfortable with their positions, because they realise that each position entails a different function for the educator, and that one position is not inferior to the other. Of course, this point of view has many positive implications for the self-esteem of the educators in the Arts and Culture learning area.

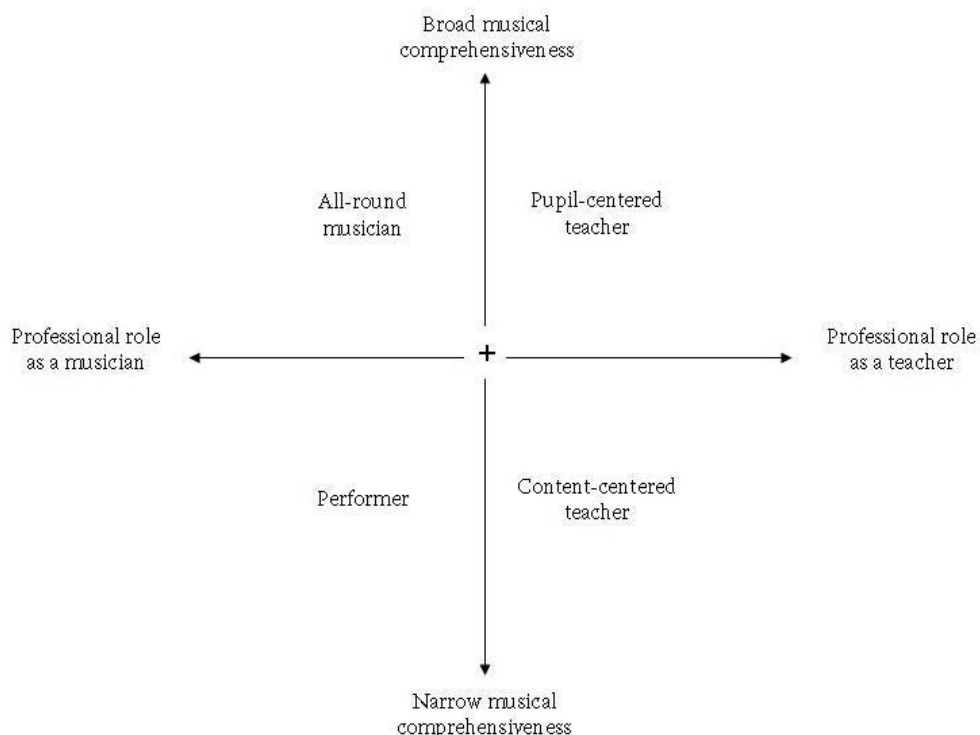


Fig. 2: Bouij's model (from Woodford 2002, p. 683)

According to Woodford (2002, p. 683), Bouij also claims that the educational institution and the programme in which teachers take part provides the “arena in which students struggle to legitimise their self-perceptions”. This makes it very important that the environment in which the educators in our project find themselves should encourage the enhancement of professional and personal self-esteem.

SELF-REFLECTION

Cox (1997) investigated who had the most influence on the choice of music teacher education as a career, and categorised this type of influence as primary socialisation of the teacher-in-training. My assumption is that, because the teachers in the ACE course come from backgrounds where they have been encouraged to become general teachers, and because opportunities for them to engage in the formal study of music and the arts did not exist in the previous political dispensation, they were influenced by society and by important persons in their lives into the career they are currently pursuing. Their parents probably never had the opportunity to study at a college or university, or sometimes even to finish high school. Choosing general teaching as a career was a very

attractive option, but specialised training in music and the arts was out of the question because the necessary basis for this was only provided in the former white schools.

When asked about this, the educators in the project at Stellenbosch University mostly indicated that they were actually trained as general class teachers, but that the headmasters selected them to teach in the Arts and Culture learning area, perhaps because they are interested in music or the other arts. In some schools, different people are sometimes selected to teach that learning area in different years, which means that there is no continuity, and not many of the teachers in a school can build up any skills, because of the short period of teaching in the learning area. The educators in the programme, however, were convinced that, since they are enrolled in the ACE in-service training programme, the headmasters will keep them as the main teachers for the learning area and not replace them in the next year. They seem positive that they could make an impact and be role models for other colleagues and for the learners.

An important issue linking to this aspect of influence is that one needs to think about future generations. Even though past generations in South Africa were deprived of certain types of privileges because of skin colour, teachers who are currently involved in the schools will have to influence pupils enough to positively encourage career choices in the arts and music. That is why it is of the utmost importance to enhance the skills and self-esteem of the current educators in this learning area.

Of course, one of the problems in South Africa is that music education has always been synonymous with instrumental, mainly Western classical music, teaching. It has also been considered up to the present an elitist, non-essential activity, which is enjoyed only by the privileged few in the upper socio-economic levels. The question is whether this project can contribute towards involving all pupils to participate in music and the arts, thereby enhancing their self-esteem and opening up career opportunities. The question to be dealt with here is: Can teachers in the Arts and Culture learning area bring about upliftment on personal, spiritual and economic levels for all pupils through a praxial approach and, if so, how? It is important to note, however, that this “self-esteem” of which I talk here must not be seen as an essentialist, Western, modernist, type of individualism, but rather as an inclusive concept, as it is also used in African cultures. It should free people to “explore individual merits and capabilities without anxiety” (Nzewi 2003:15), and that is why the development of personal and professional skills is so important.

MOTIVATION

One crucial problem in the South African school system is that the self-esteem and morale of educators are on the whole not very high. Many teachers leave the Department of Education because of low salaries, chaotic circumstances in the unusually big classes and lack of discipline, but especially because of the lack of resources. In the group that we are currently working with, only about 30%, for example, have teaching materials and aids such as a cassette or CD player, a piano, video machine, etc. available. Most of them do not even have a separate class in which they can teach their subject – they have to use a general classroom. Therefore, in order to be able to do their normal daily work, teachers have to put in extra effort just to borrow or beg for teaching aids which are normally taken for granted in other countries. Discussions in the ACE course often deal with effective and creative ideas for solving logistical and financial problems.

Some of the Xhosa-speaking educators in the ACE course are reluctant to hand in their assignments. If one takes into account that these teachers are Xhosa speaking, and that they have to do their assignments in English, the question arises whether something could be done to make them more comfortable with the university climate of writing in academic English. Their reluctance does not indicate a lack of interest.

Discussions in focus groups proved that all the educators currently enrolled for the in-service ACE programme are extremely highly motivated. This is also demonstrated by their attendance at the contact sessions. It is clear that they not only enjoy the contact sessions (particularly the practical work, such as dancing, visual arts, drama and the singing), but they testify that they use the ideas they get in the course in their classrooms, mostly with success. They also claim that they already feel more confident in the classroom, and feel more positive about their role as people who are responsible for the teaching of the Arts and Culture learning area in their schools. They are even prepared to advocate the importance of arts education among their colleagues.

According to Hookey (2002, pp. 888–889), it is important to realise that, whereas in-service training used to be the responsibility of teacher education institutions and other educational bodies, there has been a significant shift toward teachers taking responsibility for their own learning and becoming active partners in the process.

CRITICAL THINKING

The participants in this project are beginning to develop their critical thinking skills by means of individual and team research projects in which they have to formulate, for example, the importance of music and arts education. This is done by reading through

literature and combining the results of other research projects cited in the literature with their own observations in their situations. One of the research projects involved a survey on the question why certain people participate in cultural activities and others not, and the implications of these data for their teaching. Other questions and issues they have recently started to address, which they formulated themselves, are, for example: (i) How can the teacher integrate her cultural background with that of the learners to generate mutual respect?; (ii) What is the attitude of the government towards arts education – the difficulties and restraints; (iii) Empowering teachers – empowering learners; (iv) The therapeutic values of arts education; (v) How can we overcome financial restraints?; (vi) Where can we find South African resources?; (vii) Where are the artists? They devise strategies for answering these questions and in the process develop more confidence in their own problem-solving skills.

The participants in the ACE course all confess that the level of critical thinking required of them is higher than they have ever been exposed to in their previous training. The hope exists that they will benefit from this type of exercise to such an extent that their personal and professional identities will be enhanced sufficiently for them not only to feel at ease with the job they have to do in the schools, but that lifelong learning will be promoted.

It is of crucial importance that these educators start solving their own problems. In addition, they have to pass on the confidence they gain to the learners, who also have to start developing their own problem-solving skills, and their own independent, self-confident personal and professional identities.

CONCLUSION

In this article, some considerations of importance for the building of a theory that could enhance the skills, knowledge and empowerment of educators in the Arts and Culture Learning Area were discussed. Making use of grounded theory and empowerment evaluation enables the researcher to take into account several seemingly unrelated factors relevant for educators. These can be analysed, interpreted and combined into one all-encompassing model on different levels, which could be of value to future Arts and Culture educators. It is important to remember that this will be a process which takes time, but which will never be wholly complete, because of the changing nature of the phenomenon under investigation. However, drawing up a basic theoretical framework enables researchers to put future developments into existing or newly created categories, based on this first attempt. It is hoped that once such a model is in

place, it could help other providers of in-service training for Arts and Culture educators in South Africa.

REFERENCES

- Agawu, K. V. 2003. *Representing African music. Postcolonial notes, queries, positions*. New York: Routledge.
- Akrofi, E. A. 2002. *Sharing knowledge and experience: A profile of Kwabena Nketia, scholar and music educator*. Accra: Afram Publications.
- Beynon, C. 1998. From music student to music teacher: negotiating an identity. In P. Woodford (ed.), *Critical thinking in music: theory and practice*. Studies in Music from the University of Western Ontario, 17, pp. 83–105.
- Bouij, C. 1997. Swedish music teachers in training and professional life. *International Journal of Music Education*, 32, pp. 24–31.
- Breidlid, A. 2003. Ideology, cultural values and education: the case of Curriculum 2005. *Perspectives in Education*, 21 (2), pp. 83–102.
- Britz, A. M. E. 2002. *South African unit standards for Culture and Arts education and music as an elective subfield*. Unpublished MMus thesis. Pretoria: University of Pretoria.
- Burnsed, V. & G. Jensen. 1994. Teacher education in music: the development of leaders. *The Quarterly Journal of Music Teaching and Learning*, 5 (3), pp. 5–9.
- Cox, P. 1997. The professional socialization of music teachers as musicians and educators. In R. R. Rideout (ed.), *On the Sociology of Music Education*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma, pp. 112–120.
- Cranton P. & E. Carusetta. 2004. Perspectives on authenticity in teaching. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 55(1), pp. 5–22.
- Darkenwald, G. G. 1980. Field research and grounded theory. In H. B. Long et al., *Changing approaches to studying adult education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, pp. 63–77.
- Dick, B. 2002. Grounded theory: a thumbnail sketch.
<<http://www.scu.edu.au/schools/gcm/ar/arp/grounded.html>> [Date of access: 25/12/2004].
- Duscher, J. E. B. & D. Morgan. 2004. Grounded theory: reflections on the emergence vs. forcing debate. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 48 (6), pp. 605–612.
- Elliott, D. J. 1995. *Music matters: A new philosophy of music education*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Fetterman, D. M. 2001. *Foundations of empowerment evaluation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Fetterman, D. M., S. J. Kaftarian & A. Wandersman (eds.). 1996. *Empowerment evaluation. Knowledge and tools for self-assessment and accountability*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Floden, R. E., M. E. Gortz & J. O'Day. 1995. Capacity building in systemic reform, *Phi Delta Kappan*, 77 (1), pp. 19–21
- Flolu, E. J. 1994. *Retuning music education in Ghana. A study of cultural influences and musical developments, and of the dilemma confronting Ghanaian school music teachers*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation. York: York University.

- Franz, N. K. 2002. Transformative learning in extension staff partnerships: facilitating personal, joint, and organizational change. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Leadership Education, Lexington, KY, July 11-13, 2002.
- Gardner, H. 1996 : Leadership: a cognitive perspective, *SAIS Review* 16(2), pp. 109–122.
- Glaser, B. & A. Strauss. 1967. *The discovery of grounded theory*. Chicago: Aldine.
- Goduka, M. I. 1998. Linguistic and cultural diversity and implications for learning, educating and curricula transformation, *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 12 (1), pp. 34–43.
- Hookey, M. R. 2002. “Professional development”, in R. Colwell & C. Richardson (eds.): *The new handbook of research on music teaching and learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 887–902.
- Larson, B. E. 1997. Influences on social studies teachers’ use of classroom discussion, Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the College and University Faculty Assembly of the National Council for the Social Studies, Cincinnati, OH, November 1997.
- Moore, B. 1994. Multicultural education in South Africa: some theoretical and political issues, *Perspectives in Education*, 15 (2), pp. 237–263.
- Navarro, J. C. & Verdisco, A. 2001. Teacher training: what works and what doesn’t. Innovations and trends in Latin America, http://www.TechKnowLogia.org/TKL_ac...umber=8&FileType=HTML&ArticleID=196 [Date of access: 01/09/2001].
- Nzewi, M. 2003. Acquiring knowledge of the musical arts in traditional society. In A. Herbst, M. Nzewi & K. Agawu (eds.): *Musical arts in Africa*. Pretoria: University of South Africa, pp. 13–37.
- Olsson, B. 2002. Research as a strategy for professionalisation. In I. M. Hanken, S. G. Nielsen & M. Nerland: *Research in and for higher music education. A festschrift for Harald Jørgensen*. Oslo: NMH, 2002, 2, pp. 187–198.
- Olsson, B. 2003. Characteristics of teachers’ professional development. A discussion of the concept of “professionalization”. Proceedings VII of the Research Alliance of Institutes for Music Education, Bath.
- Reagan, T. 2000. *Non-Western educational traditions. Alternative approaches to educational thought and practice*. Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Roberts, B. 1991. Music teacher education as identity construction. *International Journal of Music Education*, 18, pp. 30–39.
- Sawadogo, G. 1995. Training for the African mind. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 19 (2), pp. 281–293.
- Schreiber, L. 2000. Overcoming methodological elitism: Afrocentrism as a prototypical paradigm for intercultural research. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 24(5), pp. 651–671.
- Smith, L. T. 1999. *Decolonizing methodologies. Research and indigenous peoples*. London: Zed Books.
- Soodyall, M. n.d. Music and development 2 and 3. UDW Music Education Action research Project.

- Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. 1989. *Basics of qualitative research. Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park: Sage.
- Wolfer, T. A. 1998. "Just do it": An inductive, experiential method for teaching qualitative data analysis, Evaluative Report. ERIC Database No: ED 417218.
- Woodford, P. G. 2002. The social construction of music teacher identity in undergraduate music education majors. In R. Colwell & C. Richardson (eds.): *The new handbook of research on music teaching and learning*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 675–694.
- Yacoob, S. n.d. *Music and development* 1. UDW Music Education Action research Project.



MUSICAL ENCOUNTERS

TOURISM AND CULTURAL IDENTITY: CONSERVATION OR COMMODIFICATION?

Minette Mans, Namibia

ABSTRACT

As a major contributor to national income in Namibia, tourism has vast potential for the creation of agency. Surprisingly, cultural tourism in Namibia is largely undeveloped, apart from the exploitation of visual images of “ancient and unchanging cultures”. Reflection on the relationship between cultural identity and tourism indicates that tourists seek clearly defined “authentic” identities with memorable identity markers. Thus the essay explores the meaning of this expectation for musical practice in “traditional” settings. The hybridisation of contemporary music as a reaction to the search for authenticity, and the input of contemporary musicians into cultural tourism, provides a postcolonial perspective on the local music scene. This essay interrogates cultural tourism in relation to its impact on Namibian traditional cultures and contemporary music. It problematises the commodification of culture and the power relations in the tourist-host relationship, and attempts to show how Namibian voices could speak as agents of their own change and economic growth.

TOURISM AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

Tourism has become the fourth largest income earner in Namibia, creating employment for about 10,000 people in a country with a population of 1.96 million – clearly a major contender. The industry is largely based on scenic tours, wildlife and hunting, while the potential of cultural tourism remains virtually unexploited. Yet, even when wildlife tourism is marketed, indigenous Namibian cultures form an extensive and exotic backdrop to the tourism “package” which marks the country as safe yet “untouched by time”, accessible yet a “wilderness”. Unfortunately, the very persons who are featured in advertisements seldom benefit directly. As a basic point of departure, some form of

balance or compromise needs to be arrived at between tourism and its economic benefits, and indigenous culture and the cultural industry (art, crafts, music).¹

Hence, this essay aims to spotlight the potentially positive, as well as negative outcomes of cultural tourism in Namibia. Economic empowerment and the creation of agency amongst the previously disempowered population is considered imperative. But set against this, the essay reflects on the power and means by which tourism commodifies the “culture” of the “other”, and thereby impacts on societal values and traditions.

Throughout my exploration of the cultural “*mise en scène*” as it relates to music and dance, a dualism was noted, indicating both the wish to embrace change yet retain diverse cultural identities. Where reference is made to cultural tourism in Namibia (and one suspects, most of southern Africa) it focuses on “authentic”, reified, ethnicised cultures. These tourist expectations force certain local people into a constructed performance as a cultural “other”. Against this, the surge of post-independence nationalism and development is antithetical towards such constructs and promotes national identity as a replacement for apartheid-era ethnic identities.² Tensions arise between the desire to perform and reveal traditional practices that were previously discouraged by colonial occupiers, and the need to move beyond the stereotypical vision of half naked, always friendly Africans living “close to the earth” as in Figure 1 (Ron Swilling, *Flamingo*³, February 2006) from an essay entitled “Wide smiles, elephants and parched earth”. Gordon (1997: 7) quotes Bruner, who writes:

all over the world ... cultural performances are constructed to fulfill tourist expectations. Ethnographers want thick description; tourists, thin description. Ethnographers seek a processual historical world; tourists, the timeless ethnographic present. Ethnographers demand complexity; tourists ready accessibility.

¹ See UNESCO documents and statements, e.g. *Draft Programme and Budget 2006–2007* Volume 33C/5. Major Programme IV Culture.

² See Thorsén’s discussion (2007, in this volume) of Said’s “orientalism” and Mudimbe’s views on the “invention of Africa” for a perspective on the expectations and prejudices that underlie the search for the exotic other.

³ It must be said that, in general, this excellent in-flight magazine (*Flamingo*) avoids this kind of imagery, more often featuring enterprise and development.



Figure 1 Wide smiles (Ron Swilling, Flamingo, 2006)

Essentially, a balance between continuity (as in heritage) and change (as in development) needs to be maintained. Both are required for cultural vitality. It is a case of balancing the change a culture absorbs without loss of identity, against inflexible or static attitudes and practices.

This essay raises ethical questions. For example, should diverse but fluid cultural identities be marketed as static ethnicities to attract tourists, or should the emphasis be placed on change, national development and modernisation? In other words, recognising that change is inevitable and necessary for growth, one asks whether the commodification of culture is an appropriate trade-off for economic gain? How might musicians employ indigenous cultural soundscapes in recognition of the fact that certain sound formations might be inalienable⁴ to a specific group? One might also be concerned about the kinds of identity markers that are used by the tourism industry to attract tourists, how a balance of power can be established between host communities and visitors, and how effectively musical performances can be made recognisably Namibian. Or should they?

CORE CONCEPTS

Important concepts in this essay need clarification, as the arguments will explore their interrelationships. These concepts are: a typical Namibian interpretation of “culture”; cultural and musical identities; cultural tourism; and landscape.

CULTURE

The concept of culture remains problematic. Postcolonial discourse around misuse of the term warns that it implies a bounded and distinct “other”. But Sahlins also sees culture as something which has escaped control, and has “been taken up by peoples all

⁴ See explanation and discussion of this and other terms further on.

over the world in an extraordinary moment of self-consciousness – an awareness of their own way of life as a value and above all a political right” (1994, p. 1). Notable as a measure against global uniformity, this awareness is not merely about “otherness” but also about “us” – inclusivity and the (political) empowerment it brings about.⁵

The terms “culture” and “tradition” have developed a connotation peculiar to Namibia. Traditional implies colonial⁶, and a sense of unease and discomfort is associated with “culture”, which is used as a polite term for ethnicity. A legacy of the post-apartheid period is that many forms of apartheid remain embedded in society, and the fear exists that a focus on diversity would encourage social apartheid to re-emerge. “Culture” is narrowly interpreted and now refers mainly to the traditional forms of ethnic expression, such as music, dance and beliefs. A secondary connotation of “culture” in Namibia is its reference only to San, Khoe and Bantu-speaking groups, with an apparent inclusion of the Afrikaner tribe, possibly because they so strongly created this tribal identity for themselves. Excluded, apparently, are other whites and Bastards.⁷ So, Namibian cultural practices are conceptualised within this racial framework, where African traditions convey “culture” and European-based traditions convey “art”. “The invention of race ... has informed the history of southern Africa and continues to do so in the form and shape of the media, tourism and education” (Mans 2004, pp. 91, 92). This interpretation of “culture” is therefore a racialised interpretation of indigenous knowledge systems with their history, architecture, customs, beliefs, music, dance, medicine and art. Such “a culture” is then reified, named, pictured, and politicised as a clearly demarcated identity. It is not an accident that cultural tourists are attracted mainly to Ovahimba, Ovaherero and Ju’/hoan people (see webpage illustration in Figure 2), who are marketed as primitive tribes, who are living unchanging, “ancient ways of life”.

CULTURAL IDENTITY

The multivalent concept of cultural identity is equally hotly debated. Discarding previous simplistic models of identity creation, it can be described as complex and multi-layered (Kealhofer, 1999; Head, 2000). It involves negotiated unification of commonalities, and definition of differences, by members of a group (Mans, 2003),

⁵ See e.g. Melber (2003) on political culture since independence in Namibia, and the importance of ethnic, familial and “struggle” ties.

⁶ See Winterveldt (2002) for extensive discussion on the notion that traditionalists were collaborators, modernists fought for freedom.

⁷ The community’s chosen name, meaning of mixed race.

where time and time-in-place function as important factors. Identity does not refer to a fixed sameness among members. People form and adapt their own identities by selectively assimilating or repudiating aspects of cultural practices, values and beliefs. We “learn” and inhabit one or more cultural worlds with which we *choose* to identify, based on our customs and newly forming values. Certain inalienable objects, qualities and practices define identity. Construed in this manner, identity is expressed in conscious, stylised, and symbolic forms such as arts, and in unconscious forms such as general social behaviour within and outside of families. In Africa today identities are expected to span heritage yet simultaneously engage with global economies. The freedom to choose an identity does not always exist, and “[p]resumed cultural identity often depends on a name” (Spivak 1996, p.198) assigned by others. Such names – Bushman, Nazi, Viking – freeze a stereotypical identity in our minds. For this reason, the marketing of cultural stereotypes (e.g. “the” Ovahimba) to tourists, presumes that identities are a given, based on ethnicity and a resistance or inability to change.

This essay problematises the commodification of this static form of identity, and maintains that cultural identities may be as fluid as individual identities. The flexibility and fluidity of identity are innately determined by the group’s changing system of ethics and norms. Commodification of a static, exoticised identity forces people into archaic or unnatural ways of life, merely to earn an income.

EASY TRAVELLING WAYS

■ Diverse Cultural Adventure Tours throughout Namibia ■

**WELCOME to
Namibia's ethnic
cultures!**

Our tour participants enjoy exceptional opportunities for staying and interacting with Namibia's indigenous ethnic groups in their traditional living areas situated in remote locations around the country. They will be honoured guests when visiting villages and homesteads and learn to understand the unique ways of living of their different hosts - the San inhabiting the Kalahari Desert since times untold, Herero and Mbenderu in the Omaheke Region whose daily lives centre around the holy fire and their cattle, the Batswana with their golden voices, the Damara who lost their language, and the Himba who chose to retreat into the remote Kaokoveld.



cultural tours

Other tour services:

Attendance of cultural events & visits to historic sites and monuments

Tailor-made cultural, historical and educational tours including research facilitation

Windhoek City & Township Tours

Each of our tours is accompanied by a Herero & English speaking **guide from/to Windhoek**

Figure 2 Cultural stereotypes. [Http://www.easytravel.iway.na/](http://www.easytravel.iway.na/) (adapted)

IDENTITY MARKERS

If we accept that certain cultural practices, beliefs and norms are shared within a group, one would expect them to become apparent somehow. Identity markers are the qualities that provide both tangible and intangible cultural practices with their recognisable characteristics, even when they are seldom named or verbalised. These markers may involve objects and qualities that are alienable or inalienable. Alienable qualities may be transferred to new ownership relatively easily. Inalienable qualities are those that are so closely aligned with identity that they cannot/may not be transferable.⁸ A well-known example of an inalienable instrument is the Australian Aboriginal *didjeridoo*. No matter how far it travels in the world, its identity remains linked to the Australians. Cultural vitality often demands a balance between the employment of alienable and inalienable cultural objects and practices in performing arts. Clothing, language and architecture facilitate recognition, especially of stereotypes (think of hip-hop culture, or

⁸ See Magowan (2005) for an extensive discussion of the concepts alienable and inalienable.

Rastafarians). Political hierarchies and economic (over-)emphasis of identity markers may contribute to the exploitation of disempowered cultural groups.

Dance, according to Jackson (cited by Impey 2002, p. 15), is particularly revealing of identity, anchoring belonging and endorsing it through social practice. Intangible identity markers reside in combinations of movement components and posture styles, for example, as well as embedded meanings and symbolic movements. Similarly, identity markers in musical cultures are provided by unique or inalienable tonal-spatial, timbral and rhythmic qualities. Preferred feminine vocal tone is an example of a musical marker in Namibia.⁹ In the northwest a deep, throat-resonated, vibrated tone, and in the north-east a high, post-alveolar production without vibration are characteristic female vocal qualities. Instruments – their nature, construction, representation, decoration and playing style – provide further markers.

But while identity markers provide visible/audible testimony of cultural identity, they do not necessarily imply *having* that identity. One can dress up as a Zulu chief or Nordic queen without being one. In essence – musical identity does not lie in the markers, nor in specific songs or dances. It lies in the meaning and value given to certain preferential musical processes and structures, and the rules or normative behaviour by which the practice is guided. Cultural value systems determine which qualities are inalienably part of peoples' identity.

The primary value of inalienability is expressed through the power these objects [or practices – my insertion] have to define who one is in a historical sense. The object acts as a vehicle for bringing past time into present, so that the histories of ancestors, titles or mythological events become an intimate part of a person's present identity.
(Weiner 1985, p. 210, quoted by Magowan 2005, p. 84)

Importantly, Magowan (2005 p. 85) notes that the boundaries between alienable and inalienable qualities are not fixed and might in fact be part of a continuum of alienability.

CULTURAL TOURISM

Cultural tourism is a very inclusive term, because no tourism escapes cultural contact. Usually confined to small group or one-to-one tourism ventures based on specifically identified interests and requirements, cultural tourism concentrates on heritage sites, performances, galleries, architecture, sites valued for their symbolic, social and cultural

⁹ Commented upon in various publications, this marker (vocal timbre) emerged from my field research in northern Namibia between 1992 and 2002.

significance, sites of memory that are valued by local people, and other activities such as meeting local people, enjoying local cuisine, and so on. The NACOBTA advertisement (see Figure 4) gives an indication of these kinds of activities. This supports Grinnell's (2004) study on Swedish tourism, where he aptly remarks that the tourism industry markets the world as neatly packaged, exotic locations. At its best, cultural tourism could broaden local participation in the arts significantly, create sustainable income for musicians and others, promote cultural resources, and invest in communities' quality of life. At its worst, it implies commodification of culture, intrusion into private space, and lessened emphasis on cultural value systems. The commodification of sites of memory include the Waterberg graves of German and Herero soldiers (where only German graves are accessible), or District Six in Cape Town. Magowan refers to meanings that are deterritorialised, displaced and repatriated through commodification 2005, p. 80).¹⁰

CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

Landscapes play an important role in tourism, but have broader meaning for history and culture. We can distinguish between cultural and natural landscapes. In the humanities there are many different interpretations and utilisations of the concept of landscape, ranging from ideological and social interpretations to landscape as text or as symbol. A physical landscape can be imbued with meaning, for example, the allocation of sacred or historical points of reference, over time. Physical landscapes are almost always peopled, and those people have histories, a cultural context, memories and music. The boundary between physical and cultural landscape begins to blur at this point, and soundscapes form part of a cultural landscape. Head points out that previous interpretations even of natural landscapes required revision in archaeology when the effects of early agricultural activity (hunting, clam digging) became apparent. Hence, the idea of a pristine natural landscape is "a mirage" (2000, p. 4).

Landscapes are created by people – through their experience and engagement with the world around them. They may be close-grained, worked-upon, lived-in places, or they may be distant and half-fantasised. (Bender 1993, p. 1)

Impey argues that "culture is as much a part of the treasure of the landscape as are its faunal, floral and marine resources" and that "songs, dances and ritual processes present rich repositories of local knowledge about the environment, and are particularly relevant signifiers of local meaning systems" (2002, p. 9). Landscapes may therefore be seen as

¹⁰ See also Appadurai (1996), Neuenfeldt (1994), Hayward & Neuenfeldt (1997).

meaning-laden creations of memory and of identity. Often, they represent idealised landscapes where “things were different in the past”.

Tourists to Namibia, Botswana and Zimbabwe are overwhelmingly focused upon the discovery of unspoilt natural landscapes and adventure travel (Makasa, 2003). While tour operators are largely, and consciously, responsible for the continuation of idealised images of pristine, unpeopled natural landscapes, sustainable tourism needs to include realistic socio-historical landscapes that consider changing timeframes, political constructions, and the potential for conservation. Namibia’s diverse cultural landscapes must therefore be seen in relation to their socio-political and historical nature. They are, after all, landscapes that are encultured and peopled.

CULTURAL IDENTITY AND TOURISM

Tourists enter and place themselves upon foreign landscapes, in front of animals, buildings, or alongside locals. They aim their digital cameras, changing the existing landscape while adapting their own memory landscapes. They seek to insert themselves on named places, near named people, supposedly with clear cultural identities. This is how cultural landscapes are marketed by the industry. In demand are those people apparently unaffected by modernity. But “[i]slands of unspoilt tradition in the midst of a sea of transition are a myth” remarks Winterfeldt (2002, p. 228).

The myth is relevant, because the tourism industry engages reified cultural identity through two main themes – *time* and *time-in-place*. Firstly, because identity forms and takes hold over an extended period of time, the passage of time, perspectives of the past and the pace of change play important roles. If the passage of time is valued, it also lends value to material objects. Hence, the age of objects, structures, “a culture” and practices seem most pertinent.¹¹

Communities in Africa are often described as settled “since times untold, with ancient ways and ancient ritual objects” (see Figure 2). The (African) human past is often portrayed as frozen in time, on an evolutionary scale, affirming the power of the “more evolved” visitors (see Figure 3).¹² Photographs tend to capture and authenticate truth claims through their archival capacity, and this is true also for those used in tourism. The emphasis on slow pace of change and “people that time forgot” maintains an image

¹¹ This is particularly apparent in Western cultures, where age lends a patina of value and importance to everything but human beings, where age is in fact a devaluing factor.

¹² Pictures of Bushman hunters, frozen with bow in hand, come to mind. See also Gordon’s (1997) critique on images of tall, well-equipped “tourists” (adventurers) alongside small, “primitive” Bushmen.

of uncontaminated and authentic primitives in the imagination of tourists,¹³ but is demeaning and negates cultural vitality.



Figure 3 "Frozen in time" (Gordon 1997: Plate A7)

Applied to music, the marketing of unchanging and "authentic" practices becomes absurd and negates musical growth over the past century. Many Namibian musical traditions include borrowed instruments, structures and movements, successfully reinterpreted and integrated into musical preferences. This is evidenced in Damara and Nama traditions of piano accordion, guitar and keyboard use to accompany Namastap in triple beat ("waltz") time, and in various choral traditions.¹⁴ Clearly, the effect of the passage of time and the dispersion of change are difficult to predict. Although music provides a relatively stable medium for expressing cultural values over time, value systems themselves undergo adjustment. But because meaning is so deeply embedded in function and form, decontextualised performances without value-based function run a risk of change of meaning, or de- and recontextualisation, often becoming sterile and artificial.

The second theme mentioned – time-in-place – involves the competing interests within landscapes, such as overlapping identities, who was "first", and who claims priority (Head, 2000). This overtly political theme is often "reinterpreted" by the tourism industry in terms of cultural claims on regions, for example. Time-in-place has much to do with notions of indigeneity, but this time frame is ambiguous. In Namibia competing interests exist amongst, for example, priority claims of San people in terms of being "first", the ruling party in terms of land resettlement, and white commercial farmers in terms of their development input. Several important tourism sites are leases on the large

¹³ This is often the case in rural areas, or in historic or "cultural" villages for tourists. Ovahimba in Namibia, for example, are consistently pictorially presented in this way, as are Ju'/hoan men – always pictured with a bow in hand.

¹⁴ See Mans 2003, for further examples.

tracts of traditional land¹⁵, creating yet another level in the complicated landscape. Some of these tourist sites are based on community input, shareholding and agency, e.g. the luxury Damaraland Camp, where a 10% levy (on the tariff paid by tourists) goes to the Torra Conservancy.¹⁶ At the NyaeNyae Conservancy, Ju'/hoan conservancy members have adopted land-use zoning, established game watering points and a campsite with USAID support.¹⁷ These landscapes are being collectively peopled, zoned, controlled and marketed, and in each of the above cases this includes marketing a chosen cultural image or identity, and a historical landscape informed by time in place. Hence, while the interests of time-in-place play a defining role in the distribution of political power, the interpretation of physical signs contributes much, for example, physical settlements, which creates a sense of permanent occupation of a landscape, sacred sites or historical (memory) sites and events such as the Herero "Red Flag" Day¹⁸, or remembering Cassinga.¹⁹

The example in Figure 4 reflects the newer approach to community-based tourism. Unfortunately, it still includes pictures of the Bushman hunter, the Omuhimba woman and the usual smiling faces in the 2004 advertisement of NACOBTA (Namibian Community Based Tourism Association) and thereby perpetuates the stereotyped ethnic identity (in *Destination Namibia 2004: Traveller's Guide*, pp. 6, 7).

¹⁵ Land controlled by "Traditional Leaders and Councils", previously referred to as tribal chiefs, but now officially recognised as a level of governance by the Namibian government.

¹⁶ Other examples are: Lianshulu Lodge, which supports Lizauli Village and community, Mowani Mountain Camp (Twyfelfontein Conservancy), Erongo Wilderness Lodge (Erongo Mountain Conservancy), and Spitzkoppe Community Development Association campsite.

¹⁷ The commercial gain derived by Ju'/hoansi from traditional medicine (*hoodia*) in a negotiated contract with Phytopharma has focused attention on the potentially vast benefits of indigenous knowledge.

¹⁸ The annual August commemoration of ancestral leaders of Ovaherero at the ancestral graves and surroundings in Okahandja.

¹⁹ The commemoration (in songs and dance) at the mass graves of the slaughter of men, women and children by South African troops at Cassinga (Angola) during the Namibian armed liberation struggle.



Figure 4 "Meet the People of Namibia"

CHANGE, POWER AND EMPOWERMENT

Tourism is quite obviously deeply involved in a search for diversity – exotic terrains, flora, fauna, activities, people, or music. Past and present are constantly reinvented, "sanitised" and pre-packaged for the industry. Government and heritage organisations are active agents in representing landscapes, even creating identities, but are the power relations between visitors and host communities considered?

Foreign entry into local landscapes effects change upon physical and cultural environments. Change is never a neutral process. It involves elements of (political) power, and the power relationships in the interchange between local inhabitants and tourists must be taken into consideration. Tourists visit a site and engage with hosts from a position of power. They are perceived as having considerable wealth, leisure time and education. By contrast, by the very nature of being a "cultural site", African communities often engage with tourists from a position of relative poverty, little leisure or travel time, limited education, and little choice in how they are viewed – thus lacking in agency. Theoretically, the Namibian tourism policy addresses power relationships and aims at sustainable livelihood. In its community-based tourism policy the Ministry of

Environment & Tourism (<http://www.met.gov.na/>) states that: “Creating agency in host communities must be a priority – where such communities are not only financially enriched through tourism, but have the knowledge and power to dictate when, where and how engagements with visitors takes place.” The main principles undergirding this policy are that: people must be consulted and their ideas included in tourism planning and legislation; legislation should assist and support tourism development; the informal tourism sector should be organised and recognised as representing community interests; and that large businesses operating on communal land should involve and benefit local residents, who often gain little from wildlife and tourism on their land.

Although the MET policy makes no mention of cultural tourism, Namibia, in collaboration with the UNESCO Windhoek Office, is finalising a project proposal founded on community-based cultural tourism and related food security actions. This project is aimed at capacity building, but intends to “maintain and market cultural heritage sites and customs” (UNESCO 2005). Again, arts or intangible culture are not mentioned.

Fortunately the Namibia National Commission for UNESCO (2005), through the work of the Ministry of Youth, National Service, Sport and Culture, sees the development of contemporary cultural practices as an important factor for (national) identity and reconciliation through rapid change and development. But nation building in a country with diverse cultural practices and value systems is bound to be fraught with issues. The solution has been to promote “unity in diversity”, and focus on preservation of indigenous performances through registered “cultural groups” (troupes) at festivals and competitions.

The *UNESCO Major Programme IV Culture* has chosen diversity as its principal priority for the biennium 2006–2007 “promoting cultural diversity, with special emphasis on the tangible and intangible heritage” (UNESCO 2005, p. 56). The acknowledgement of the existence of diverse cultural identities means that this organisation is set on maintaining recognisable, identifiable cultures as a means to fight the current homogenisation of music that is paralysing so much creative cultural production and originality in the world. It is an effort to promote pride in their “own” culture, valuing the knowledge systems that have developed with experience over time, while appreciating that difference need not be dangerous.²⁰ Diversity can be a source of great interest, creating a cultural industry and economic growth. Tourism is clearly a factor in the development

²⁰ Obviously “difference” has been used to drive people apart in countless tribal wars in Europe, Africa and elsewhere, and the infamous apartheid policies are still a fresh reminder of how divisive difference can be.

of a cultural industry, although the future impact of tourism on cultural practices and identities is unpredictable.

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE AND MUSICAL IDENTITY

Culture contexts imply knowledge systems by means of which we understand the natural and supernatural world surrounding us. For people who have been settled in an area for a long time, the physical environment is an enabling mechanism for the continuous production of knowledge. Thinking evolves from the physical environment as a direct result of having to engage in food production, general economy and safety, and from social environment through the need to communicate. Music and dance also respond to the environment, with elements such as collective history, beliefs and knowledge systems thus eventually being formed into musical systems.

Musical systems are evidence of complex interactive knowledge systems. Organised over time into classifications (music for seasons, or age-related rituals, or for commercial gain), repertoires (collections of songs), instruments, performance contexts, materials and dance movements²¹, music responds to environment, philosophy and interpretations of life. Musical expression assists in anchoring a sense of belonging. Although open to change, the identity components of musical sound, such as tonal-spatial and rhythmic-temporal elements, tend to be fairly stable identifiers of culture context (markers) unless there has been consistent impact from elsewhere – missionaries, oppressors, schools, or the media. For example, my research reveals that song texts in northern Namibia are continuously recreated to commemorate social change and historic events. But the musical elements of the songs evinces little change. Thus, a form of song-dance (*uudhano*) that was performed during girls' initiations changed text and became a freedom song-dance, and is now a form of commemorative song-dance in the Omusati region.²² During initiations many rigid performance rules applied, whereas in the commemorative form these rules, and thereby a part of the musical system, have been relinquished. In this example the dance components are inalienable and stable, but text and performance rules have undergone many changes. Such creative adaptations keep musical practice a current yet an innate part of cultural identity, making it possible to share this music with others.

²¹ See Bakare & Mans (2003) for a discussion on the effect of environment and economic pursuit on basic dance components and styles.

²² From interviews with kuku Malyanna Iishitile (Outapi 1999, 2000) and kuku Magano Kakwambi (Olukulo 1999).

History informs identity. Namibia, a young nation, has difficulty defining national identity because a shared and united past is lacking. The remembered past is fragmented, riddled with stories emerging from apartheid, tribalism, war and brutality. For cultural vitality, Namibian perspectives of the past need to be renegotiated. Diverse perspectives can be brought into the open in performance. Disparate and conflicting histories, much of which is known only to a few remaining elders, make themselves known through the narratives contained in songs and praise chants, also in musical structures and practices. The ways in which certain customs migrate reveal a treasure of information on historical events and intercultural assimilation. Renegotiation of interfaces between sites of colonial and indigenous cultural memory, recreated and represented in music, could yield captivating and restorative perspectives. Some songs praise ancestors and family lineage, singing far back into personal pasts.²³ Many *outjina* (women's songs) of the Ovaherero commemorate the battle at Hamakari²⁴, which nearly concluded the Herero extermination ordered by a German officer.²⁵ *Outjina* describe the fearlessness of their cattle in the face of rifle fire, the bravery of heroes, the famine that followed and the wails of dying women and children ("We had only veld berries and roots to eat!" recalls Dina Kandovazu of her ancestral deprivation), reaffirming historical landscape and identity. And, while there are very few colonial songs that create historical landscapes in Namibia, a notable exception is "Das Südwesterland"²⁶, which celebrates the physical landscape and describes the hardships of early settlers. Interestingly, German and South African visitors regularly request this song, thereby appropriating a tenuous identity claim upon the remembered land.

ENRICHING HYBRIDS - CHALLENGES FOR TOURISM PLANNERS

It seems clear that sustainable tourism planning requires recognition of the importance of musical practice and identity. New musical hybrids might help to overcome ethnic

²³ In many ways these praise songs about ancestors, their cattle and their places can be compared to songs of the Sami people in northern Sweden, Finland and Norway, for example, *joiks* (personal songs) and *vuelie* (storytelling songs).

²⁴ An article on recording these songs for an art exhibition appears in the Air Namibia in-flight magazine (Mans 2006).

²⁵ It is estimated that 60–80% of a total population of 80 000 Ovaherero were killed by German forces between 1897 and 1904. Under a proclamation by German commander General von Trotha, survivors of the battles were pursued and annihilated, and their cattle killed or confiscated, causing many thousands to die of starvation and disease.

²⁶ Prior to independence, Namibia was called South West Africa, or Südwestafrika.

barriers. Added to this are potential financial benefits that tie in well with the official goals of development, economic growth and social change.

Sketching a local background, it must be said that, unlike many other African cities, Windhoek is not known for its “township vibe”. A certain amount of live music can be heard in isolated clubs, but in general, discussion with “township” inhabitants²⁷ confirms a dearth of music, even on weekends. “Daar gaan niks aan nie!” (Nothing happens!) says Dennis Eiseb, himself a jazz and traditional Damara pianist. Visits to these suburbs are on the tourist route and contemporary live music shows – community or professional – would provide local entertainment, contribute to economic empowerment, and satisfy tourist demands.

Similarly, the increasing popularity of choral traditions and gospel music attests to an area of great potential development. Some Christian denominations, for example, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia, have invested time and expertise in the Africanisation of their hymnal (see Löytty 2005; Hellberg 2004). One outcome has been the creation of lively *uukorasa* (youth songs) and the hybridisation of existing Finnish, German and American hymns to accommodate Owambo tonal-spatial and rhythmic customs. Drums and accompanying movements further enliven these services. Many visitors might find attendance at a church service meaningful, but to date there has been no concerted effort to connect churches with tourists.

Tourism is not necessarily concerned with cultural issues and concerns, but the potentially negative impact of tourism on indigenous cultures and the cultural industry (art, crafts, music)²⁸, should be balanced against its potential for development (Mercer 2002). Potential benefits include: contact and fostering of understanding between cultures; the strengthening of communities through rejuvenation of events and festivals, and employment creation; the use of facilities developed primarily for tourism, bringing higher living standards to inhabitants; a revaluation of culture and customs, including preservation and transmission of cultural and historical traditions; and encouraging civic involvement and pride in local and national heritage (<http://www.uneptie.org/pc/tourism/sust-tourism/soc-global.htm>). One of the ways to achieve these benefits might be through hybridisation of especially urban performances.

Musical hybridity implies a creative blend of styles, cultures or times, although Radano and Bohlman maintain that “[w]orld music and postmodern hybridities have yet to

²⁷ I refer to conversations with e.g. D. Eiseb, I. Sam, O. Shigwedha, F. !Gaoseb, K. Kiema, L. Tsâtagos, C. T. Iiyambo, V. Muuondjuo and J. Kavari.

²⁸ See UNESCO documents and statements, e.g. *Draft Programme and Budget 2006–2007* volume 33C/5. Major Programme IV Culture.

eliminate racial barriers" (2001, p. 37). The efforts made by, for example, Swedish musicians to create musical hybrids in South Africa (see Thorsén 2007, in this volume) provide insights into these processes. Perhaps Appiah's (1996) statement frames the requirement of difference which is lacking – in this case a national Namibian identity:

To sell oneself and one's products as art in the marketplace, one must, above all, clear a space in which one is distinguished from other producers and products – and one does this by the construction and the marking of differences (Appiah, 1996:59).

Contemporary recordings by bands in diverse musical styles attempt to do just this, by exploring their own musical heritage and experimenting with sound combinations that will convey a sense of identity in a hybridised form. Some musicians incorporate traditional musical bow patterns into their songs (The Mighty Dreads), others are developing *shambo*, an indigenous contemporary form (N'gatu, Gazza and others). However, a short study by Shigwedha (2005) indicates that departing tourists of various ages, from diverse countries and both genders unanimously expressed difficulty in recognising a Namibian identity – a Namibian sound – in commercial music, and that live and recorded music is difficult to locate locally. These findings indicate a music industry that is disorganised, underfunded and undervalued by public and state. The National Broadcasting Corporation and private radio stations, such as Radio Energy and Radio Unam, make an attempt to broadcast local music, but this appears insufficient. In Windhoek only two central and a few "township" stores stock locally recorded productions (although one has recently realised the gap and has started advertising its collection of Namibian recordings prominently). In an attempt to ascertain whether musicians recognised possibilities in the tourism market, Shigwedha (2005) interviewed local musicians. He aimed to establish whether tourism provided a viable and acceptable market for musicians. His survey shows that musicians have not considered this field of marketing at all. Namibian artists often distribute their own recordings, but do not, as far as could be established, supply guesthouses, lodges or other kinds of accommodation with promotional materials or sales recordings.

If inalienable musical qualities hint loudly at the existence of specific cultural contexts, then these qualities (vocal, timbral, instrumental, tonal and rhythmic) could lend a Namibian sound to contemporary music. Local musicians are well aware of this, but are perhaps less aware of ethical concerns around the use of both alienable and inalienable objects and qualities in their hybridising processes. Many similar examples of hybridised musical ventures can be found in *The Rough Guide to World Music Vol. 1*, (for example the Baka Beyond recordings, Broughton *et al.*, 1999, pp. 604–606), but several of these have attracted severe criticism. In the constant search for the new and exotic, the world

music (and tourism) market occasionally stoops to appropriation of inalienables. The debate on aspects of inalienability and the public domain needs to be aired. It is up to the local population to identify and value such qualities not only for their fiscal value, but also for intangible cultural value. Indeed, the whole idea of reinventing traditional sounds or dances for outsiders remains a sensitive issue. Clearly, no vibrant musical culture will remain untouched by commercialisation or commodification. While it is not within the scope of this paper to present final solutions, it is clearly in the best interests of the population to plan a strategy involving all the stakeholders. This is important because there is a global powerplay behind the tourist industry and the changes it brings about.²⁹ Stakeholders are not all equally empowered in the negotiations.

AGENTS OF THEIR OWN IDENTITIES

Cultural development implies a goal and strategies of a nation-state in terms of the preservation of heritage sites; consideration of the (identity) images created in displays (museums, monuments, tourism adverts, journals, archives); and consideration of the impact of globalism and tourism on the intangible heritage (music, beliefs, stories, proverbs, a sense of collectivism, etc.). Questions about the viability and sustainability of culture(s) could, according to Mercer (2002), make use of indicator categories as aids to planning and research. He refers to indications of cultural vitality, diversity and conviviality; cultural access, participation and consumption; cultural lifestyle and identity; culture, ethics, governance and conduct (2002, p. 3). Considering the second and third indicators in particular, negotiation must take place amongst stakeholders – culture-bearers, tourism planners, researchers and conservationists. When devising a local development strategy a “development coalition” (*ibid.*) could be formed. The vitality of a culture, for example, cannot be evaluated without in-depth investigation of what culture-bearers consider to be their inalienable identity markers, and how they assess the vitality of such markers. These markers might be perceivable to insiders only, and the “window-dressed” markers of the tourism industry might not be considered of great cultural value at all – hence easily commodified.

Host communities need informed discussion on tourism development in terms of gain and loss, identification of alienable and inalienable objects³⁰ or qualities, decisions about their use, and potential consequences for core cultural values and customs. Diverting aspects of one’s customs, history and culture towards a commercial market must involve

²⁹ See <http://www.uneptie.org/pc/tourism/sust-tourism/soc-global.htm> for discussion on tourism as part of a “global peace” industry.

³⁰ For example, the locally mined red ochre skin powder is inalienably Ovahimba.

considered decisions and well-planned actions to be conducive to economic empowerment *and* cultural development.

A key factor in the creation of a balance of power is the issue of who makes the decisions, and this should be addressed within the broader context of the interface of culture and human development strategies. Local inhabitants presently have the opportunity to become agents of their own economic development and cultural vitality. As Mercer (2002) points out:

Cultural planning cannot come after the fact. It cannot be added on. Cultural planners must persuade other types of planners that what is being planned in cultural planning are the lifestyle, the texture and quality of life, the resources of identity and belonging, the fundamental daily routines and structures of living, shopping, working, playing – folk, work, place. (Mercer 2002, p. 172)

In conclusion, considering the growing trend towards cultural tourism, the dwindling cultural resources that can feed into this market, plus the drive to eradicate poverty, it is imperative that serious attention is paid to music as an expression of heritage and cultural diversity, at the same time addressing the inherent tensions between development and tradition, of financial gain versus commodification of culture, and of the development of agency. No easy task, but ultimately well worth the effort.

REFERENCES

- Appadurai, A. 1996. *Modernity at large: cultural dimension of globalisation*. Minneapolis and London: University of Minnesota Press.
- Appiah, K.A. 1996. Is the post- in postmodernism the post- in postcolonial? In P. Mongia, (ed.), *Contemporary postcolonial theory: A reader*. London: Arnold, pp. 55–71.
- Bakare, O. R. & Mans, M. 2003. Dance philosophies and vocabularies. In A. Herbst, M. Nzewi, M & K. Agawu (eds.), *Musical arts in Africa: Theory, practice and education*. Pretoria: UNISA Press, pp. 215–234.
- Bender, B. (Ed.) 1993. *Landscape: Politics and perspectives*. Providence/Oxford: Berg.
- Bender, W. 2004. Modern African music: An autonomous music. In S-M. Thorsén (ed.), *Sounds of change: Social and political features of music in Africa*. Stockholm: Sida Studies 12, pp. 87–106.
- Breckwoldt, T & Breckwoldt R. 2004. *Destination Namibia 2004. Traveller's guide*. Windhoek: Namibia Gateway, pp. 6–7.
- Broughton, S., Ellingham, M. & Trillo, R. 1999. *World music. Volume 1: Africa, Europe and the Middle East*. London: The Rough Guides.
- Gordon, R.J. 1997. *Picturing Bushmen: The Denver African expedition of 1925*. Athens: Ohio University Press.

- Grinell, K. 2004. *Att sälja Världen. OmVärldsbilder I Svensk Utlandsturism. (To sell the world: Images of the Other in Swedish tourism abroad.)* Gothenburg Studies in the History of Science and Ideas, 17. Gothenburg University, pp. 87–106.
- Hayward, P. & Neuenfeldt, K. 1997. One instrument, many voices. In K. Neuenfeldt (ed.), *The didjeridu from Arnhem Land to the Internet*. Sydney: John Libbey, pp. 1–10.
- Head, L. 2000. *Cultural landscapes and environmental change*. London: Hodder. Co-published by New York: Oxford University Press.
- Hellberg, J. 2004. Transculturation in a church's music: An ethnography of musical change in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia. Unpublished paper presented at the Swedish-South African Research Network seminar in Stellenbosch, November.
- Impey, A. 2002. Culture, conservation and community reconstruction: Explorations in advocacy ethnomusicology and participatory action research in northern KwaZulu-Natal. *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, 34, pp. 9–24.
- Kealhofer, L. 1999. Creating social identity in the landscape: Tidewater, Virginia, 1600–1750. In W. Ashmore & A. B. Knapp (eds.), *Archeologies of landscape*. Oxford: Blackwell, pp. 58–82.
- Kirkegaard, A. 2001. Tourism industry and local music culture in Zanzibar. In M. E. Baaz & M. Palmberg, (eds.), *Same and other: Negotiating African identity in cultural production*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, pp. 59–76.
- Löytty, S. 2005. A creative collision? An investigation of the musical developments born out of the encounter between Finnish Missionaries and Owambo Culture. Unpublished dissertation in partial fulfilment of the degree M.A., Performing Arts Department, University of Namibia.
- Magowan, F. 2005. Playing with meaning: Perspectives on culture, commodification and contestation around the didjeridu. *Yearbook for Traditional Music*, 37, pp. 80–102.
- Makasa, K. 2003. The political situation in Zimbabwe and its effect on cultural tourism in the Upper Zambezi Basin and Namibia. Unpublished BA 4th year paper, Performing Arts Department, University of Namibia.
- Mans, M. 2003. *Music as instrument of diversity and unity: Notes on a Namibian landscape*. Research Report No. 124. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.
- Mans, M. 2004. The changing body in southern Africa: A perspective from ethnomusicology. In L. Bresler (ed.), *Knowing bodies, moving minds: towards embodied teaching and learning*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, pp. 77–96.
- Mans, M. 2006. Taking a musical past into the future. *Flamingo*, March 2006, pp. 24–27.
- Melber, H. (ed.) 2003. *Re-examining liberation in Namibia: Political culture since independence*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.
- Mercer, C. 2002. *Towards cultural citizenship: Tools for cultural policy and development*. Stockholm: The Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation & Gidlunds Förlag.
- Ministry of Environment & Tourism. *Community Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) Namibia's Community Based Tourism Policy*. http://www.met.gov.na/programmes/-cbnrm/cbtourism_guide.htm. [Date of access: 23.11.2005]

- Namibia National Commission for UNESCO. 2005. *Namibia culture overview 1990 – 2004*. Compiled by the Ministry of Basic Education, Sport and Culture in close cooperation with the Namibia National Commission for UNESCO. Windhoek.
- Neuenfeldt, K. 1994. The essentialistic, the exotic, the equivocal and the absurd: The cultural production and use of the didjeridu in world music. *Perfect Beat*, 2 (1), pp. 88–104.
- Radano, R. & Bohlman, P.V. 2000. Introduction: Music and race, their past, their presence. In R. Radano and P. V. Bohlman (eds.), *Music and the racial imagination*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, pp. 1–53.
- Sahlins, M. 1994. A brief cultural history of culture. Unpublished paper prepared for the UNESCO World Commission on Culture and Development, Paris, UNESCO.
- Shigwedha, O. 2005. A study on Namibian music and cultural tourism. Unpublished BA 4th year paper, Performing Arts Department, University of Namibia.
- Spivak, G.C. 1996. Poststructuralism, marginality, postcoloniality and value. In P. Mongia (ed.), *Contemporary postcolonial theory: A reader*. London: Arnold, 198–222.
- Swilling, R. 2006. Wide smiles, elephants and parched earth. *Flamingo*, February, pp. 21–23. Published for Air Namibia by Venture Publications and Destiny Investments.
- UNESCO, 2005. *Draft Programme and Budget 2006–2007* volume 33C/5. Major Programme IV Culture. Paris: UNESCO.
- Winterfeldt, Volker. 2002. Traditionalism: Social reality of a myth. In V. Winterfeldt, T. Fox and P. Mufune (eds.), *Namibia, society, sociology*. Windhoek: University of Namibia Press, pp. 227–238.

WEBSITES CONSULTED

- <http://www.rainbowtours.co.uk/countries/namibia/topics/safaris/namibia-nature-and-culture-tour.shtml>. [Date of access: 3 March, 2005]
- http://www.travel.za.net/africa_himba.html. [Date of access: 3 March 2005]
- <http://www.uneptie.org/pc/tourism/sust-tourism/soc-global.htm>. [Date of access: 12 January 2006]
- <http://www.usaid.org/na/success.asp?proid=3> [Date of access: 12 February 2006]
- http://www.wilddog-safaris.com/safari_tours [Date of access: 5 September 2005]
- http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=25323&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html
[Date of access: 5 September 2005]
- <http://www.giardino.com.na/links.htm> [Date of access: 3 Oct 2005]
- <http://www.easytravel.iway.na/> [Date of access: 5 September 2005]
- http://www.met.gov.na/programmes/cbnrm/cbtourism_guide.htm
[Date of access: 5 September 2005]

AFRICAN MUSIC IN GLOBAL DIASPORIC DISCOURSE: IDENTITY EXPLORATIONS OF SOUTH AFRICAN ARTIST JOHNNY MBIZO DYANI

Patricia Achieng Opondo, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa

ABSTRACT

South African bass player Johnny Dyani viewed music as a human expression with no exclusions. This same freedom was a mark of his political identity and engagement in the liberation struggle. This essay describes the influences on him and the musicians with whom he collaborated to demonstrate his versatility and broad scope of projects. It begins by contextualising his formative years in South Africa to provide information on the neighbourhood music that was at the core of his musical genius during his years in Scandinavia. Life in exile, in the diaspora, plus the historical moment of the avant-garde provide the freedom for him to explore and create new networks, subsequently opening up new levels of consciousness that freed African music. Such freedom enables Johnny to unleash his creative genius and express newly defined identities in his quest to extend and develop South African music through his *sk'enke*¹ concept coupled with improvisation.

EAST LONDON AND CAPE TOWN 1940S-1962

Johnny Dyani was born in East London, South Africa in 1945. His mother died while giving birth, so his father's older sister, Minnah Dyani, whom he called grandmother, brought him up. They lived in Duncan Village², a township outside East London. Minnah owned a boarding house where many blacks, including musicians, stayed when in East London. There was a piano in the house that the children played. Johnny played a homemade guitar and 1-string bass and sang in the church.³ The Dyani family kept cattle and provided milk to the boarding house and neighbourhood, including the

¹ Communal sharing.

² Duncan Village was the second largest black township after Soweto. It no longer exists as it was demolished during the forced removals in the 1960s.

³ The family belonged to the Bantu Presbyterian Church.

Mbambisa home that had a *shebeen*⁴ in the back. Mrs Mbambisa acquired instruments, which her children Fats and Tete played. When delivering milk, Johnny played on the instruments and took a liking to the bass. He and Fats formed a trio. Tete Mbambisa formed two vocal groups, the Four Yanks and later the Junior Four Yanks. Johnny joined the Junior Four Yanks when 11 years old and was the lead vocalist (Rasmussen 2003, p. 12).⁵

East London had for years been a regular stop for itinerant musicians, and the youth eagerly absorbed tips from them and experimented further with their peers. Saxophonists Nick Moyake and Dudu Pukwana from Port Elizabeth stayed at the Mbambisa home for weeks and months at a time. Mongezi Feza, a trumpeter from Queenstown, came to East London and would either stay with Johnny or with relatives in Duncan Village. Dick Khoza, a drummer and promoter, invited the Four Yanks to Cape Town in 1961. They took Dudu Pukwana as backing musician, playing the sax and piano. At a show in Langa Township, white pianist Chris McGregor invited Dudu to play in his band. In 1962 the Yanks travelled to Cape Town again, and Johnny stepped in for the soprano, who fell ill. From this point on he became a member of the group. The Four Yanks' repertoire, arrangements and choreography outdid the local groups in Cape Town and as a result they had quite a following (Rasmussen 2003, p. 14).

In the 1960s Cape Town was the mecca for jazz and Johnny got to meet key figures on the jazz scene, including Chris McGregor, Cups Nkanuka, Ronnie Beer and Christopher Columbus Ngcukana. During afternoon jams in Langa Township, drummer Louis Moholo backed the Four Yanks. Tete Mbambisa was a talented pianist, composer and arranger, and led a quintet with singers/dancers. Johnny performed with them as they toured along the coast. It was under Tete Mbambisa's leadership that Johnny made his stage debut. With an upcoming jazz festival in Johannesburg in October 1962, Tete disbanded the Yanks to form another band. Johnny returned to East London, torn between singing and playing (Rasmussen 2003, p. 14).

⁴ A social meeting point in the townships with live music and which serves beer and typically has a butchery.

⁵ A number of references for this essay are from articles written by a number of authors and interviews conducted by editor Lars Rasmussen with the respective persons. As Rasmussen notes, "This book gives a kaleidoscopic portrait of Johnny Dyani, the man and his music" (2003 p. 7).

INFLUENCES ON JOHNNY DYANI'S LIFE IN THE 1950S-1960S

In the 1950s the most influential band in East London was the African Revellers Review led by Eric Nomvete. They had a wide repertoire that included jazz standards from the swing era, waltz, tango, *mbaqanga*, be-bop and dance music. Johnny joined the band, playing bass. Mongezi Feza and Dick Khoza were also in the group. Nomvete's band moulded Johnny's tastes and broadened his musical vision. Johnny was also greatly influenced by the fraternity of black musicians in Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, Queenstown, East London and Johannesburg, who actively engaged with the modern jazz movement in the United States headlined by Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie and Thelonius Monk. This fraternity of South African musicians avidly collected records and sheet music, and incorporated be-bop into their own music (Jordan 1987, p. 4).

Amongst the black South African music legends were Kippie Moeketsi, McKay Davashe, Sol Klaaste, Christopher Columbus Ngcukana, Cups and Saucers Kanuka and Gideon Nxumalo, while the younger generation included Dollar Brand⁶, Dudu Pukwana, Chris McGregor, Hugh Masekela, Jonas Gwangwa and Johnny Gertze. The early modern jazz movement had its roots in the major cities, and was patronised by black workers and intellectuals in addition to a growing number of white students and artists. Important centres were Dorkay House in Johannesburg, the Ambassadors Jazz Club in Cape Town and the Blue Note café in Durban. During this time an important outlet for these talented youths was the "African Jazz and Variety Show" owned and managed by Alf Herbert.

Most of the adherents of the modern jazz movement had passed through the mill of 'African Jazz', where they had learnt the bitter lessons of cultural exploitation and artistic prostitution Herbert was notorious for. Their determination to preserve their cultural and musical integrity was in great measure a direct consequence of this experience (Jordan 1987, pp. 4–5).

In 1963 Eric Nomvete wrote the score for a variety show *Xapa Goes to Town*, and picked Johnny to act. The show was to be staged in East London in October when a larger production from Johannesburg *Back in Your Own Backyard* would arrive. Dudu Pukwana and Nick Moyake were in the band. When the show arrived in East London, it needed a bass player, so 16-year-old Johnny stepped in and travelled with them to Cape Town, with Tete Mbambisa on piano. *Back in Your Own Backyard* disbanded in Cape Town and Johnny stayed on playing with the locals. There was an opening for bass players as Johnny Gertze had left South Africa in 1962 (Rasmussen 2003, pp. 14–15).

⁶ He later changed his name to Abdullah Ibrahim.

Chris McGregor was a talented white music student from the South African College of Music and was well known in Cape Town circles as a modern jazz pianist and exponent of existentialism (Jordan 1987, p. 5). He collaborated with black township musicians from Cape Town, including Cups Kanuka (tenor sax), Chris Columbus Ngcukana (alto sax), Sammy Martiz (bass), and from 1961 developed a lasting relationship with Dudu Pukwana, alto saxophonist from Port Elizabeth.

Important cultural events in the early 1960s were the 1962 and 1963 Moroka Jazz Festivals, which had a national impact.

At the '62 Moroka Festival, Chris McGregor fielded a septet drawn from Cape Town musicians; Dudu Pukwana came with a quintet, the Jazz Giants, including Nick Moyake on tenor and Tete Mbambisa on piano. A second group from Cape Town, the Jazz Ambassadors, led by Cups and Saucers Kanuka, included Louis Moholo on drums. Nomvete from East London brought along a group that included Mongezi Feza on trumpet. All these were promising musicians, destined to win recognition not only in Johannesburg but internationally. In 1963 they were all brought together in one group, the 'Bluenotes', led by Chris McGregor (Jordan 1987, p. 5).

The Blue Notes led by Chris McGregor and the Cape Town band, the Swinging City Six, led by Ronnie Beer won first place in the band competition at the 1963 Moroka Jazz Festival. Subsequently, the Blue Notes were invited to perform at the Antibes Jazz Festival in France in July 1964 and McGregor invited Mongezi Feza, Louis Moholo and Sammy Martiz from the Swinging City Six to be part of the Blue Notes. Dudu Pukwana and Nick Moyake were already in the band, but Sammy Martiz was unwilling to leave the country, so Johnny replaced him.⁷ After a few weeks the Blue Notes recorded 15 tracks on 3 transcription records for the SABC⁸, *Township Bop*. This was Johnny's first recording session (Rasmussen 2003, p. 15).

The Blue Notes that left South Africa had not yet found the style that would make them famous. Their style was hard bop with Mongezi Feza being the only one showing tendencies towards free style jazz. They sounded very much like such American bands as the Jazz Messengers, but they had their own repertoire, mainly composed by Chris McGregor and Dudu Pukwana (Rasmussen 2003, p. 17).

⁷ According to Lex Monde Futshane, bassist from New Brighton, Port Elizabeth, Pytch "Big T" Ntsele was another bass player from Port Elizabeth who was considered, but turned down seeing that he was still in school. Interview May 10th 2007.

⁸ South African Broadcasting Corporation. Transcription records are made for broadcasting and never released commercially. *Township Bop* was a bootleg album, released without the consent of the SABC.

EXILE IN EUROPE: THE EARLY FORMATIVE YEARS, 1964-68

Following their performance at the Antibes festival, members of the Blue Notes decided not to return to South Africa, as new segregation laws forbade integrated bands. Dollar Brand invited the band to Switzerland and they performed at Club Africana in Zurich. After this Nick Moyake returned to South Africa and the Blue Notes, now a quintet, moved to London in 1965 and played at Ronnie Scott's Jazz Club. Ronnie Beer, tenor sax player from Cape Town, replaced Moyake and they were invited to play at the Jazzhus Montmartre in Copenhagen for a month. During their London years, the band, influenced by Albert Ayler and Don Cherry, developed a free jazz style. The exponents of free jazz, including Ornette Coleman, John Coltrane, Eric Dolphy and Archie Shepp, broke with the conventions of be-bop to embrace the avant-garde, which provided them with more freedom and scope for improvisation.

The Blue Notes disbanded and Johnny formed a duo with Mongezi Feza and played with other musicians. In 1966 Johnny travelled to Rome with saxophonist Steve Lacy, who invited Johnny and Louis Moholo to Argentina. Subsequently Lacy moved to New York and Johnny and Louis were left stranded until the remaining members of the Blue Notes brought them back to London. They then joined Chris McGregor's new band, Chris McGregor's Sextet, which included Dudu, Mongezi and Ronnie Beer. Johnny stayed with Chris from 1967-8 and they recorded "Very Urgent" (1968).

'Very Urgent', which features compositions by Dudu Pukwana and Chris McGregor, was expressive mastery of the musical idiom of the avant-garde by the leading South African musicians in Europe. It remains a collector's item (Jordan 1987, p. 6).

Johnny criticised many South Africans whom he felt were overly influenced by their surroundings and were selling out. "I'm trying to work for Africa so that Africa can work for me.. Where the other cats are concerned the instruments are playing them, instead of them playing the instruments. I mean, I refuse to be played by an instrument" (Wilner 1971, p. 26). Johnny felt that Dollar Brand and Makaya Ntshoko were different from Chris McGregor and his musicians, who he felt were losing their way by being overly influenced by American music, and for that reason Johnny found it difficult to play with them (Wilner 1971, p. 26). While in London amongst the South African exiles Johnny adopted his father's name "Mbizo" to strengthen his African (isiXhosa) identity.

By 1970 the Blue Notes had dissolved and Johnny was freelancing with a number of British, American and African artists, and was also a member of Dudu Pukwana's Spear and Chris McGregor's Brotherhood of Breath. The freedom and fluidity provided by the avant-garde pushed musicians to seek each other out and share new experiences and

creations. Johnny was working with Earthquake Power waiting for a call to join trumpeter Don Cherry in Sweden; he admired Cherry greatly and enjoyed collaborating with him. At that time he did not enjoy playing with European musicians, who he felt talked too much. “With Don we don’t seem to need to talk, we just communicate, but musicians here are always saying ‘this should be an F or G or something’ ... I just feel we shouldn’t speak, we should just play the music when we meet because the moment we open our mouths we tell lies. That’s my philosophy, you could call it” (Wilner 1971, p. 21). Johnny eventually moved to Scandinavia, following Mongezi Feza.

CREATIVE MATURITY - THE 1970S IN SCANDINAVIA

When Johnny moved to Sweden in 1969 he was a transformed musician, no longer simply a backing musician but also a composer and arranger. When he first came to Europe he was still a teenager and matured while in London, but also started taking drugs. Sweden opened up new opportunities for him. From October 1969–1971 Johnny played with Don Cherry, and met Turkish percussionist Okay Temiz, and the three formed a trio, Eternal Ethnic Sound, led by Cherry, who wrote most of the music.

In 1969/70 the three were artists-in-residence at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire, in the United States for 3½ months. While in the States, Johnny got to play with Archie Shepp and Gato Barbieri. Later in December 1970 Johnny played with 3 bands at the Baden-Baden New Jazz Meeting in Germany, in a 17-piece orchestra led by Cherry, a 10-member band led by Joachim Kuhn, and a sextet led by Kuhn (Rasmussen 2003, p. 18). Johnny spent 1971 in London and Paris and recorded an album with Al Shorter. While in London he joined the musician’s co-op and led his own ensemble, Earthquake Power, and made recordings.

In 1972 Johnny moved to Denmark, where Mongezi was living with his Danish wife, and where Dollar Brand had built a following at the Jazzhus Montmatre. Dollar Brand had converted to Islam and changed his name to Abdullah Ibrahim. He persuaded Johnny to do the same. Johnny moved in with his Danish girlfriend, Janne Dirch Peterson, and adopted her son Thomas⁹, and they had 2 daughters Hasannah and Thandi.¹⁰ In 1972 Johnny toured Germany with Abdullah’s band Universal Silence, and at the end of 1972 Johnny and Mongezi formed a trio with Abdullah in Copenhagen and performed a session for Danish radio.

⁹ Thomas Akuru Dyani was born in Copenhagen in 1964. His father was a Nigerian, Oladipo Charles Akuru. Thomas later became an accomplished percussionist and also played with Johnny

¹⁰ Hasannah was born in 1975 and Thandi in 1977

Keith Knox was managing SEVDA¹¹ in 1972 and booking them throughout Scandinavia. In late 1972 Okay discussed plans to create a group with the two South African musicians in exile, Mongezi and Johnny, who were occasionally working with Abdullah in Copenhagen. This gives birth to the trio Music for Xaba¹² and Knox booked a tour for them in Sweden.¹³ Johnny and Mongezi frequently stayed at Temiz's country home in Akersberga, outside Stockholm. They practised there and played gigs in Stockholm. They performed Johnny's compositions and traditional South African songs with Johnny as the bandleader supplying most of the material. This was a different person from the bassist with the Blue Notes, as he now had a dominant presence and was responsible for most of the band's compositions. Music for Xaba released 3 albums.

In October/November 1972 Music for Xaba played concerts in Stockholm and a festival in Gothenburg. Kjell-Ake Svensson, secretary of the national association of jazz clubs (SJR) arranged a number of appearances in jazz clubs in the south of Sweden. Knox observes, however, that though the music was "outstandingly adventurous", their popularity was limited and audiences small, as few outside Stockholm knew the group (2003, p. 132).

In spring 1973 they planned a trip to Turkey because "it didn't seem that much more could be achieved in Sweden and it was time to move on." (Knox 2003, p. 133) Concerts were arranged for their last two evenings in February 1973 at Club Artibus in Gamla Stan, known as "Greta's Place." These concerts represented the swan song in Stockholm for Music for Xaba. A few days later they played at the Blue Bird Club in Kristianstad in the south of Sweden, which was reputedly their finest concert (Knox 2003, p. 133)

In 1973 Music for Xaba traveled to Turkey and Johnny recorded an album with Okay there, and while there he decided to form the band Witchdoctor's Son. Following this trip, Mongezi returned to London to perform with Chris McGregor and he died there 2 years later. Between 1973 and 1986 Johnny's focus was on his own band, Witchdoctor's Son, which appeared in various permutations – quartets, quintets, sextets, septets. These bands included Scandinavian musicians such as Pierre Dorge, Ulf Adaker, Krister Andersson, Jesper Zeuthen, Palle Mikkelborg, John Tchicai; South Africans Jonas Gwangwa, Ernest Mothle, Makaya Ntshoko, Gilbert Matthews, Peter Radise, Bheki Mseleku, Dudu Pukwana; as well as Kenyan Mohammed al-Jabry and South American

¹¹ SEVDA consisted of Swedish musicians and two Turks, Akay and Okay Temiz, on drums and percussion.

¹² "Xaba" means "God" in isiXhosa

¹³ Abdullah returned to South Africa, and Johnny and Mongezi spent more time rehearsing and performing with Music for Xaba

Alfredo do Nascimento and Luiz “Chium” Carlos de Sequeira. There was also Don Cherry, Harry Beckett and Doudou Gouirand (Rasmussen 2003, p. 21).

In 1973 Johnny toured Europe with Abdullah’s big band, Africa Space Program, and in the same year recorded two albums with Abdullah, which were a syncretic mix of Xhosa, Cape Town and Islam to produce “music of remarkable, perhaps unsurpassed beauty” (Rasmussen 2003, p. 21). After Mongezi died in 1975 members of the Blue Notes, including Johnny, reunited to record a tribute album to him. While in Copenhagen, Johnny was part of the band, United Nations, and they recorded some of his compositions.

In the late 1970s Johnny toured Europe with the Blue Notes, then a quartet with Chris McGregor, Louis Moholo and Dudu Pukwana. He also toured with David Murray, Butch Morris, Kees Hazevoet and Han Bennink. His versatility as a bassist is suggested in the following statement:

Even though Johnny’s music was based on repetition and typical South African fondness for simple and beautiful melodies, he had no trouble playing with free style jazz musicians. Johnny’s bass would become the fixed point around which the other musicians revolved (Rasmussen 2003, pp. 21-22).

Johnny was considered as an avant-garde musician, while he also rediscovered his Xhosa heritage as evidenced in collaborations with Abdullah Ibrahim and Don Cherry. He regarded himself as a folk musician and not a jazz musician. “He often explained it [his music] as a mix of everything and developed the term *sk’enke* (from Afrikaans for “giving”) to signify his music as a mix of elements like soul, funk, jazz, African tribal music and even punk rock” (Rasmussen 2003, p. 22). Rasmussen observes that as Johnny explored his instrument, he played on the strings and the body, and spent a long time on the neck of the instrument and was able to express a variety of emotions (*ibid.*)

In 1980 Johnny had a nervous breakdown and moved to Sweden. He stayed with his new Swedish girlfriend, Magdalene Andersson. Back in Sweden he revived Witchdoctor’s Son and performed at European festivals. He played with the Chris Boustedt trio, which had Chris on sax and South African Gilbert Matthews on drums. Between 1982–1986 Johnny played in the trio Detail and they released at least 9 recordings. The line-up included Norwegian Frode Gjerstand on sax and British drummer John Stevens and Johnny.¹⁴ Detail and Music for Xaba had a similar line up – horn, bass, drums – but the styles were vastly different, with Detail’s performance marked by more improvisations, while Music for Xaba focused on Johnny’s repertoire. Though he became a respected

¹⁴ Johnny made more recordings with Detail than with any other band (Rasmussen 2003, p. 22)

bandleader, soloist, reliable backing musician, who was in demand and received great reviews, Johnny felt neglected as he did not make much money nor achieve the status of internationally renowned bassist Charles Mingus.

Between 1984–85 Johnny played in Pierre Dorge's New Jungle Orchestra as one of two bass players. Hugo Rasmussen "played traditional bass line, whereas Johnny was free to improvise" (Rasmussen 2003, p. 24). Johnny travelled with the band to the US, and also played with Chris McGregor's big band South African Exile's Thunderbolt in Germany, with Detail in England, and Witchdoctor's Son in the US and Canada. When he returned to Europe he formed a new band – Johnny Dyani South Africa Project.¹⁵ Artists in the band included Ernest Mothle, John Tchicai, Harry Beckett, Thomas Dyani and Makaya Ntshoko.

CULTURAL AND POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT WITH THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CONGRESS

The political landscape in South Africa in the 1960s was marked by the Sharpeville massacre, the banning of the ANC and declaration of the State of Emergency, followed by the repressive regime for the next 20 years. The ANC launched a campaign to isolate the apartheid regime and this resulted in the formation of the ANC international mission to coordinate this campaign (Jordan 1987, p. 5).

In 1970 the ANC opened an office in Stockholm with Sobizana "Bizo" Mngqikana as the first Chief Representative. The ANC invited Johnny to be part of the South African delegation to participate at the World Festival of African Arts and Culture (FESTAC) in Lagos, Nigeria in 1977. Other South Africans included Miriam Makeba and Jonas Gwangwa. Shortly after this trip Johnny toured Tanzania and Zambia with drummer Louis Moholo. Later in 1982 the ANC once again invited him to the Festival of Culture and Resistance in Botswana.

Lindiwe Mabuza was the ANC Chief Representative to Scandinavia and based in Stockholm from 1979–1988. She comments on the productive cooperation she had with Johnny, who was the ANC cultural ambassador for a number of years. Mabuza highlights the fact that Johnny was a politically inclined artist and a very loyal member of the ANC. Johnny would gather friends to support cultural activities that the ANC organised, for example, he assisted in putting together the cultural component for the 70th anniversary of the ANC, and over the years contributed a portion of his royalties

¹⁵ This was also referred to as the Jazz Against Apartheid Project, particularly after Johnny's death as the band continued with the tour.

from record sales to the ANC (Mabuza 2003, p. 150). Pallo Jordan describes Johnny's political engagement as follows:

Throughout his musical career Johnny has actively associated himself with the liberation struggle. During Festac '77 in Lagos, Nigeria, he was part of a small ANC delegation. At the Gabarone 'Culture and Resistance Festival', he proved an articulate spokesperson on behalf of the musicians in a number of panels. In Scandinavia, he was an active member of the ANC regional structures, often contributing his services to raise funds for the movement (Jordan 1987, p. 8).

Gilbert Matthews played with the famous road show, the Golden City Dixies, and moved to Sweden and sought political asylum there.¹⁶ He recorded four albums with Johnny and toured Europe playing with Witchdoctor's Son and Brotherhood of Breath. Matthews claims that Johnny did not like Sweden much but loved Denmark, though he had a broken relationship there, which made it too painful for him to stay. Both Matthews and Johnny preferred Denmark to Sweden as there was more happening in Denmark (Matthews 2003, pp. 114–9).

In 1985 Johnny was invited to write and perform the soundtrack for the Swedish TV film "Apartheid", produced by Anne Percy and Judy Scott. She wanted to do a story on the South African struggle in an artistic way, so visited the ANC Chief Representative in Stockholm at the time, Lindiwe Mabuza. The film was funded by SIDA¹⁷ and made in both English and Swedish. There was a lot of tension when the film was being made, with Johnny having constant quarrels with Gun Eliasson. During an interview with Anne Percy, with Gilbert Matthews present, this is what Anne had to say when she felt that Johnny overreacted to a disagreement with Gun Eliasson who was involved in making the film:

I got a lot of respect from all of you. I felt it was based on mutual respect and friendship. And that's why I quarrelled so much with the other girl, Gun Eliasson, because she came like a queen, and she didn't even know how the work had to be prepared. We were at the point of losing [sic] Johnny and all of you, because of a quarrel between Johnny and Gun. And for me, it was very important that I should not exploit anything. It was based on friendship and respect. Because Johnny was so sensitive, if he felt just a little thing, you know! Because of the past, I can understand that, but this is a sensitivity of being oppressed and all the shit you've been through, of course. A little wrong word, and he could quit the whole thing (Rasmussen, p. 125).

¹⁶ This was possible as he was a member of the ANC.

¹⁷ SIDA also supported the ANC struggle. The Pan Africanist Congress was angered when the film was released, as they had not been interviewed.

Anne Percy was aware of the sensitivities that resulted from past oppression and Gilbert Matthews had to intervene a lot. Another issue that aggravated matters was when rock musicians approached Lindiwe Mabuza to fund an ANC concert in Gothenburg, but none of the musicians had been involved in the struggle nor did they want other musicians involved. Gilbert Matthews was furious because both he and Johnny were well-known names and yet were overlooked. They brought in Abdullah Ibrahim from the States (Percy 2003, p. 125). Johnny was always fighting, as he wanted recognition and respect. In addition to this, heavy drinking and drugs during his London years took their toll. Matthews felt that these outbursts also had to do with Johnny leaving South Africa when he was too young. According to Matthews Johnny once said in an interview, "I love Sweden, and this is the only country in the world where I've got a work permit but I can't work!" (*ibid.*)

The Johnny Dyani South Africa Project planned a tour in Germany in cooperation with Jazz Gegen Apartheid Project led by Jurgen Leinhos in Frankfurt. The tour opened at the Berlin Festival on October 16, 1986. Johnny was unable to continue with the band on tour as after the concert he collapsed backstage and went into a coma and died 10 days later, at the age of 30. Johnny died at the height of his career, having composed over 200 tunes and featured in over 70 records (Rasmussen 2003, pp. 25–27). He was buried in East London and his Danish and Swedish girlfriends and 3 children were present. In Europe memorial concerts were held in Lund, Stockholm, and Jazzhus Montmartre in Copenhagen. Late in October at the Berlin Jazz Fest he was remembered by Abdullah Ibrahim, Don Cherry and Louis Moholo. In December Chris McGregor and Dudu Pukwana held a memorial concert in London. In his moving tribute to Johnny published in the ANC cultural journal *Rixaxa*, Pallo Jordan laments that with Johnny's passing, he left behind a gap amongst committed South African artists; leaving an imprint on black South African music and the international jazz scene, and reaching millions through his music. Jordan highlights that Johnny's inspiration sprung from the working class, and indeed, he was possessed of a quiet dignity and with a capacity for hard work, yet never pompous or conceited (Jordan 1987, p. 8):

He clearly understood that freedom for the artist and in the arts is inextricably bound up with freedom in society. It was this recognition which determined the path to which he hewed, as a politically committed artists.

UNRAVELLING JOHNNY DYANI'S MUSICAL IDENTITY: ENGAGING JAZZ AND TRADITIONAL MUSIC

"It's folk music and we improvise on it." (Johnny Dyani, 1983)

Johnny describes his approach to playing bass as having been influenced by his early exposure to traditional choral singing and the South African musical bow, stressing the importance of vocal music in South Africa (Solothurmann 2003, p. 218).¹⁸ The repertoire of early South African jazz bands mostly consisted of traditional choir songs transposed for the band with the vocal parts arranged for the horn. This was a style that several South African musicians in exile, including Jonas Gwangwa, incorporated into bands formed overseas. This choral style was also evident in Dollar Brand's piano compositions.

Johnny was 13 years old when he started playing the bass. He grew up with Mongezi Feza and together they played Charlie Parker and Duke Ellington. His early orientation to jazz came from drummer Dick Khoza, who explained the rudiments to him. Subsequently he increased his skills, playing first with Eric Nomvete's band followed by the years with the Blue Notes. At the age of 18/19 years in London he broke away from convention and develops his interest in South African traditional music, recalling influences from East London and Cape Town.

When he arrived in Europe, Johnny was disappointed that while many musicians eagerly embraced jazz, they remained ignorant of their own folk music. "It's dangerous, especially for young kids. They are without musical identity because they ignore the folk music played by their elders" (Solothurmann 2003, p. 218). Johnny found it important for musicians to embrace the cultural heritage of their surroundings and country, giving the example of renowned South African saxophonist Kippie Moeketsi, who brought ethnic music into his version of jazz, which also had a strong township feel.

That is what I really miss here in Europe. There is no neighbourhood music which means that musicians have no real relation to their neighbourhood. Now you find technology advancing everywhere and nobody is aware that its time to lean on the folk music because that's the way everyone will survive (Solothurmann 2003, p. 218).

In further conversation Solothurmann asks Johnny whether in South African townships people distinguish between folk and pop music. Johnny responds that it is all there – folk, entertainment, dance, jazz music, and really a matter of personal choice (*ibid.*)

¹⁸ Jurg Solothurmann's interview with Johnny Dyani in 1983 is reprinted in Rasmussen (ed) 2003.

Johnny Dyani made his own distinctive contribution to the contemporary cultural climate of a healthy cosmopolitanism, reflective of the universality of aesthetic values and the need for humanity to share its common cultural heritage (Jordan 1987, p. 8).

While Johnny feels that music is a human expression with no exclusions, he was also keenly aware of difference and mentioned the difficulties of living with people with different mentality and behaviour from yours, which could cause you to lose your own tradition.

You have to behave in a different way and you tend to lose your tradition. You have to fight to be yourself. So no wonder that you get a little bit disturbed at times. Of course, you can try and control it because there are very good people around you who respect South Africans (Solothurmann 2003, p. 221).

This ambivalence of individual voice in the global flow in diasporic discourse is characteristic. Solothurmann asked him whether playing with international bands with folk roots was a provisional solution as he was in exile, and if he would rather have played South African music with South Africans. Johnny responded by saying that he strove for a universal image, but points out that all must understand him as a leader.

My political view to the society is different from theirs and I have a struggle. That my music reflects this is natural. Every member in the group has to contribute out of his background and views. So it's like an international family ... I'm not Black in the sense of Black Power. Music is international. I've got a heart like you. Especially me coming from South Africa is very important to see that there are people in the West who are trying to understand us. Maybe in the future I can bring such an international band to South Africa so they can see and hear those people who helped us in our struggle of understanding mankind and being understood (Solothurmann 2003, p. 221).

So Johnny embraced a global identity, but acknowledged that individual inflections were shaped by one's neighbourhood, environs and heritage, underscoring the importance of understanding others and being understood. Johnny was driven to start his own band, Witchdoctor's Son, so as to enable him to play South African music so that he could talk to others with his own music. For him it was important for others to have the appropriate rhythm and feel when playing South African music.

Johnny Dyani's musical identity and positioning was not simplistic; he himself cautioned against labelling music as folk or jazz.

The folk music and the folk people around that does it all. The rest is ... jazz! And I don't feel good about the word "jazz". As far as I heard from the Americans it has

something to do with the oppression of the black people, like kwela for instance. It's originally a downgrading expression from the white people. I don't like to call myself a jazz musician. I rather say folk musician. It's folk music and we improvise on it. It's like bebop. Everybody plays it, but doesn't know what it means. Max Roach said that bebop comes from the police beating us people (Solothurmann 2003, p. 222).

In 1983 Johnny explained a new concept/label that he hoped would stretch beyond previous narrowly defined concepts:¹⁹

And the music is actually new, it's a new title which ... it's been happening in South Africa, which is called s'kenge [sic], s'kenge music. It's not kwela, it's not mbaqanga this time, it's s'kenge ... s'kenge means to mix the tradition, jazz, reggae, punk, you know, s'kenge means to mix everything. So that's the new title to this. And there's no other South African I know that knows that title, I mean this label, s'kenge, it's a new.. totally new thing, I hope it will work by next year. So, s'kenge music, now (Skovgaard 2003, p. 238).

For Johnny his concept of *sk'enke*²⁰ was an overarching principle, and a label he was comfortable with. It describes an experience for musicians to share creativity using the resources around them. This was a concept that also signified a mix of elements drawn from folk music, jazz and the avant-garde. The *sk'enke* concept is indeed a hybridised and inherently transculturative process, which ultimately allows for freedom and sharing and improvising. According to Homi Bhabha, the notion of hybridity or hybridised culture should be understood as an “ongoing condition of all human beings” (1994, p. 211). This is because we all undergo a continuous process of transculturation.

LAYERED IDENTITIES AND IDENTITY EXPLORATION IN THE DIASPORA

Illustrations of Johnny's creative approach/style as folk music that is improvised on are evidenced in his bands. The trio Music for Xaba 1972 recording was Johnny's and Mongezi Feza's first work away from Chris McGregor and it was recorded after they arrived in Scandinavia from London. Andrey Henkin (online), who reviewed the album says, “It is an intriguing mix of traditional melodies in free improvisation”.

In Europe Johnny was internationally recognised as a creative, original voice in the improvised music scene. He formed his own band, Witchdoctor's Son, to play his interpretations of South African music. Witchdoctor's Son performed in Denmark and Sweden in many different guises. The 1979 recording of the band was produced by

¹⁹ Interview with IB Skovgaard in Copenhagen.

²⁰ This is *tsotsitaal* (slang) for “communal sharing”.

Stanley Koonin in Stockholm and reedited by Goran Freese in 1984. Stanley Koonin, a South African based in Sweden from 1967, was part of the organisation *Ny Kultur* (New Culture) that presented rock concerts in Stockholm's Kulturhus (House of Culture) from 1974. Other musicians Johnny collaborated with for the studio session included Peter Shimmy Radise, a tenor saxophonist from Johannesburg, who arrived in Sweden in 1959 with the revue *The Golden City Dixies*, electric bassist Virimuje Willie Mbuende, who arrived from Namibia in 1969; and Dudu Pukwana on alto sax and whistles. Bosse Skoglund was the drummer and Kenny Hakansson electric guitarist. Johnny composed all the titles except "Thula Thula".

Knox has this to say about Johnny's music:

The music is very special. Transcending the boundaries of nations and cultures, Mbizo's enthusiasm spread and inspired the session with his intense passion. A passion, which revelled in nostalgia for myths and melodies of Marabi and Kwela. Mbizo's life was music, and he gave his life for music. These sessions are Mbizo's own testimony to the spirit of hope for the future, for a better world. It is a statement so filled with vitality and with joy of rediscovered roots that will stand as a signpost to the whole of his life and work (Knox n.d., online).

Vusisizwe Mchunu aptly summarises the broad branches of Johnny's musical identities, which evoke Xhosa folklore, Methodist church harmonies, a strong dance beat, township grooves, improvised African jazz and the jazz avant-garde (Mchunu 2003, p. 154). However, at the core of all this was the folk music, the music of the South African neighbourhood.

For Johnny, the jazz idiom begins with the traditional African song. The zest, the celebration, the fusion of styles, Johnny put in his many interpretations of folk songs, went a long way to popularise these unknown gems, introducing them to a wider international audience ... That Johnny was seeking to attain a higher level of understanding and appreciation of African music by the world audiences, goes without saying (ibid.).

Johnny's collaborations in the various band formations were a quest to extend South African music through improvisation. The album "Good News from Africa" (1973) by the Dollar Brand duo²¹ was recorded 10 years after they had both left South Africa, and the two come together reminiscing about their roots. According to Abdullah, up until the early 1970s South African musicians did not play traditional music. Though dance

²¹ That was Abdullah Ibrahim with Johnny Dyani.

bands in Cape Town played traditional Capetonian music, jazz musicians did not want to play it.

But we understood the vitality of it. We understood the other genres, like jazz music, but we found that our own material was valid. So it was not just playing the music but the confirmation of our own experiences, not our individual experience but our national African experience. Johnny was one of the first to endorse the music and say, let's do it, without being ashamed of this non-sophisticated folkloristic material that dealt with a part of our society that was supposed to be dead (Ibrahim 2003, pp. 79–80).

Abdullah says that they played Xhosa modalities and opened new possibilities. “So with Johnny, I touched the Xhosa tradition, and it’s massive what you can do with it! We experienced it and expanded on it and it opened a freedom for us. It allows you space” (Ibrahim 2003, p. 80).

LEVELS OF CONSCIOUSNESS

Lefifi Tladi is an accomplished fine artist and poet living in Stockholm. While still in South Africa, he was mentored by Bra Geoff Mphakati, a cultural worker who guided a generation of musicians, fine artists and writers from his home in Mamelodi. Lefifi, inspired by the Last Poets, formed Dashiki, a cultural ensemble closely allied to Steve Biko and the Black Consciousness Movement. Lefifi went into exile in 1976 and met Johnny in 1977 at Festac in Lagos. They later became great friends and collaborated creatively in Stockholm. In Stockholm Lefifi studied with world-renowned painter Harvey Tristan Cropper.

On 5th November 2005 I went to the opening of a painting exhibition of work by Lefifi at Studio 5, St. Paulsgatan 5 in Stockholm and had an interesting conversation with Harvey Cropper. Cropper’s parents were from the Caribbean and he was born in the United States. Cropper adamantly views himself as an expatriate living and working in Stockholm, and rejects being labelled as someone in exile! For many years Cropper was part of the ANC solidarity committee, and his painting “Faces of Apartheid” has been used by the United Nations.²² He also painted the artwork used on Johnny’s last CD jacket.

Lefifi was and continues to be preoccupied with levels of political consciousness and this is expressed creatively in his poetry, paintings and collaborations with poets, musicians, dancers and visual artists. Lefifi distinguishes two branches of South African music in

²² Interview in Stockholm, November 5th 2005.

exile, noting that the levels of creativity of musicians in Europe were of a different order than those in the United States. For instance, this was evident in the reincarnation of the Blue Notes, particularly the tribute to Mongezi (Blue Notes for Mongezi, 1975)²³, as well as in individual artists such as Makaya Ntshoko and Gilbert Matthews. Using visual art as a metaphor, Lefifi sees graphically more challenging images from the exiles in Europe, while those in the US, like Hugh Masekela, produce ordinary social realist paintings that are not particularly challenging (Matthews and Tladi 2003, p. 120).

Johnny had working relationships with artists, including Harvey Cropper²⁴, Dumile Feni and Clifford Jackson, and this put his music at another level of consciousness (*ibid.*) According to Lefifi, an example of Johnny's creative genius is seen in his collaboration with Philip Wilson in *Frills*.

And that's real, when I talk about a creative genius, and that the whole thing, with the concept of this freeing African music, that it is two-dimensional, that the first tone of freeing African music, it's the African music that gives you freedom, free African Music. And then freeing African music as another tone means giving African music freedom, you get it? And this was the dimension in which we were discussing (Matthews & Tladi 2003, p. 121).²⁵

Lefifi preferred Johnny in the intellectual music context rather than in the political context as cultural representative for the ANC, a period in Johnny's life that he felt lacked his typical creative genius. In Lefifi's view one's creative genius is released when there is freedom to create and explore, opening up all levels of consciousness. This is a form of communal sharing in the spirit of Johnny's *sk'enke* concept. Lefifi and Johnny spent time with other poets and artists. The two performed together, with Lefifi reading jazz poems and Johnny playing in free form. Lefifi was moving to another level of consciousness and writing in his mother tongue and Johnny took to this.

²³ Lefifi was so touched by the chants as they called Mongezi's name, and found it so ethnic and got goosebumps as it reached to the essence of the musicians (Matthews & Tladi 2003, p. 121).

²⁴ The album cover for Johnny's CD used a Harvey Cropper painting.

²⁵ In conversation, Port Elizabeth bassist Lex Monde Futshane gives the example of the song *Ithi Gqi* – "show your face" – as a typical composition by Johnny in which you hear the two statements, then improvised straight away. Futshane stresses that most of Johnny's compositions opened with short statements from folk songs, and immediate move to improvisation. Interviewed May 10th, 2007.

THE DIASPORIC JOURNEY - A CONFLICTED EXPERIENCE

Okpewho notes that two seminal concepts in Afro-diasporic discourse are positionality and identity (2001, p. xxxiii). With this paper's focus on an individual artist's diasporic experiences in Europe, particularly in Scandinavia, we are able to closely examine how South African identities are self-consciously styled in performance, and to see how South African value systems in new contexts take on new expression as immigration shapes these values. Performance provides an important arena for these reconnections to be made, as seen in the creative genius of Johnny Dyani.

Abdullah Ibrahim remembers some of difficulties of life in exile. He was in Zurich when he received news of the Blue Notes stranded in Antibes, France. He and his wife Sathima Bea Benjamin invited them to camp out at their student house.

This horrendous situation we had experienced in South Africa, in one sense it was good to get away from it, but in another sense it was hard to be away from home and family. The thing that was driving us was the music. At least it gave us some kind of serenity (Ibrahim, 2003, p. 75).

Abdullah expresses his bitterness about some of the consequences of the exile experience. He reminds us that Johnny was only 16 when he left the country, and Mongezi was also that age. He laments that they left their families and homes, never to see them again.

This is why this exile experience makes me very, very angry. We were exiled, even within our own country! How many South African musicians have died in exile! They died in exile outside South Africa and inside South Africa! Exiled from everything, white orchestras were being supported by millions and our musicians were dying! Still to this day, many musicians live and die in poverty! So there is a lot of anger and bitterness (Ibrahim 2003, p. 81).

Despite the many hardships he suffered in exile, Johnny was able to develop into an outstanding musician, away from the oppressive climate that restricted many other South African artists. At the time of his death, he was able to leave behind an enduring imprint on black South African music and the international jazz scene.

As we unpack the voices of South African musicians in exile in Scandinavia, the significance of identity in these new contexts is manifest. As Stuart Hall points out, identity is about being positioned and investing in a particular subject position (1990, p. 225). The process of positioning cannot be understood outside discourses of power. This ambivalence of individual voice in the global flow in diasporic discourse is characteristic. Yet, within these global flows is an underlying quest for self-definition –

which is encapsulated in the idea of signifying. This signifying comes about with the process of re-memory and remembering, which results in revisioning and various appropriations. As a consequence, new identities are designed with fresh roles and new manifestations, all as a result of reconfiguration, transformation and refashioning. At the core of identity debates in the diaspora is the central issue of basic humanity that stretches beyond race. Ultimately, the result was that émigrés in the diaspora simply highlight and share the sheer creativity of individuals triumphant in new environments.

In the diaspora the acculturative process results in hybridity, with some essentialising features that serve as important identity markers for South Africans who make their home in the foreign country. For Johnny, he went back to his roots, his neighbourhood music, *kwela*, *marabi*, *mbaqanga* etc. and these energised and inspired his compositions.

The diaspora provided immigrant communities with new networks of relations – representing a global space and worldwide web of interaction. Memory of Africa, roots, traditions, ancestral ways are both political statements for artists in the diaspora, but are also a source of psychological stability, enabling them to find assurance in folklore and indigenous values, and consequently enabling them to express themselves and affirm their identities. South Africa remains in their subconscious, and for Johnny Mbizo Dyani, it remained part of his political identity. Over the years Johnny cautioned about the dangers of losing one's personal and musical identity. In the social context of being in exile he discovers himself, far away from home, discovers who he is and what his contribution to the world is – to keep South African music alive! Johnny was an exponent of multicultural connections, and with his *sk'enke* concept believed in the universe and unity.

REFERENCES

- Bhabha H. 1994. *The location of culture*. London: Routledge
- Hall, S. 1990. Cultural identity and diaspora. In J Rutherford (ed.): *Identity: Community, culture, difference*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, pp. 222–237.
- Henken, Andrey. n.d. South Africa. <http://www.allaboutjazz.com/articles/> [Date of access March, 2006].
- Ibrahim A. 2003. Interview. In J Rutherford (ed.): *Identity: Community, culture, difference*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, pp. 79–81.
- Jordan, P. 1987. Johnny Dyani: A portrait. *Rixaxa: Cultural Journal of the African National Congress*, 4, pp. 4–8.
- Knox, K. 2003. Music for Xaba at “Greta’s Place.” In J Rutherford (ed.): *Identity: Community, culture, difference*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, pp. 132–133.
- Knox, K. n.d. Johnny Dyani. <http://www.southafricasweden.org/kultur/dyani.htm> [Date of access November, 2005].

- Mabuza L. 2003. Johnny Dyani. Reminiscence. In J Rutherford (ed.): *Identity: Community, culture, difference*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, pp. 149–151.
- Matthews, G. 2003. Interview. In J Rutherford (ed.): *Identity: Community, culture, difference*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, pp. 114–119.
- Matthews, G & Tladi L. 2003. Interview. In J Rutherford (ed.): *Identity: Community, culture, difference*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, pp. 119–124.
- Mchunu, V. 2003. Songs for Steve Biko and Witchdoctor's Son – Remembering the music of Johnny Mbizo Dyani. Reminiscence. In J Rutherford (ed.): *Identity: Community, culture, difference*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, pp. 154–155.
- Okpewho, I. 2001. Introduction. *The African Diaspora: African origins and New World Identities*. Okpewho. Davies & Mazrui (Eds) Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Percy, A. 2003. Interview with Gilbert Matthews Present. In J Rutherford (ed.): *Identity: Community, culture, difference*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, pp. 124–127.
- Rasmussen, L (Ed.). 2003. *Mbizo: A Book About Johnny Dyani*. Copenhagen: The Book Trader.
- Skovgaard, I B. 2003. Interview with Johnny Dyani, Copenhagen, October 2, 1983. Reprinted in J Rutherford (ed.): *Identity: Community, culture, difference*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, pp. 238–239.
- Solothurmann, J. 2003. An Interview with Johnny Dyani. In J Rutherford (ed.): *Identity: Community, culture, difference*. London: Lawrence & Wishart, pp. 217–223.
- Wilner, V. 1971 Johnny Dyani Working for Africa. *Melody Maker*, February, p. 26.

REIDENTIFYING AN AUDITORY COMMUNITY: WORSHIP IN AN INDEPENDENT SOUTH AFRICAN CHURCH

Christy M. Smith, University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa

ABSTRACT

Churches around the globe use music to unite their members in acts of worship and adoration. This practice has existed for centuries in Christian history, but in churches that draw their members from a variety of religious traditions and cultural backgrounds, the histories of the songs mix unevenly with the histories of the individual singers, sparking multiple meanings amongst the people. The music both foments disagreements over the types of music that should be used to express various aspects of worship, and unites the community in ecstatic encounters with the divine. What constitutes a worship experience? How are worship identities forged and then redefined? How does music feature in both of these questions? Using The New Harvest Christian Fellowship (a non-denominational church in Johannesburg) as a case study, this essay probes the role of music in the socially complex Christian communities that are emerging throughout South Africa today.

INTRODUCTION

Acoustic signification ... orientates the social imaginary: it situates individuals through echolocation, but also integrates them into an auditory community ... that registers the succession of sounds as its perceptible history. One acoustic regime ... gradually replaces another and, in that transition, existing modes of being are attenuated, contradicted or reinforced. On occasion a new ontology ... is inaugurated. (Titlestad 2003, p. 43)

Independent churches (churches not affiliated with a particular denomination) draw their members from a variety of religious traditions and cultural backgrounds. Presencing self with God, and community with God, is a central devotional activity in many of these churches. “Worship” is the name given to this activity and music is one of the most common mediums through which it is expressed. Marshall McLuhan famously stated that “the medium is the message” and music, being the medium in this case, communicates and facilitates many coded messages in the communal setting of a

service. In South Africa cultures long separated by a racist political system have been filtering into each other since the demise of the apartheid government in 1994. This is evident in the media, the migration of previously marginalised people into the suburbs, and in equity programmes, such as Affirmative Action, that seek to promote the careers of the previously disadvantaged sectors of society. Aside from needing to deal with cultural diversity, the different generations that make up South African society are co-existing worlds apart as a result of rapid shifts in politics, economics and technology, facilitating an everchanging social landscape.¹ In a multidenominational, multicultural and multigenerational church setting, worship messages are not the same for all people. The histories of the songs mix unevenly with the histories of the individual singers, sparking multiple circuits of meaning amongst the people. The music both foments disagreements over what kind of music should be used to express various aspects of worship, and unites the community in ecstatic encounters with the divine.²

According to Robert Webber (1997), three main styles of worship have characterised the history of the Christian church from the first century to the twentieth: liturgical worship (associated today with Catholic and Orthodox churches), traditional Protestant worship that arose from the Reformation and is based on reformed liturgies (such as in Methodist, Anglican and Lutheran churches), and the free worship of the modern era that developed in “churches that are neither historic nor traceable to the sixteenth-century Reformation” (1997, p. 33) (such as the Vineyard, Assemblies of God and a variety of independent churches). Webber also notes that a revolution in worship has been witnessed in the latter part of the 20th century with the introduction of “a variety of new styles that have shaken the churches of the world” (1997, p. 34). Many of these styles involve new interpretations, and combinations, of older worship styles blended with contemporary trends in theology and music.³ Musics from cultures around the

¹ For a detailed discussion of these current trends, not only in South Africa, but also generally in the West, see, for example, the writings of Codrington, Regele & Schultz, and Sweet, listed at the end of this paper.

² As Margery Wolf points out, “(w)hen human behavior is the data, a tolerance for ambiguity, multiplicity, contradiction, and instability is essential” (1992, p. 129). A human-centred interpretation of musical meaning that allows for the ambiguities of human consciousness, is socially situated, temporal, and recognised in power relations, was therefore applied in the study on which this essay is based. (For example, much was drawn from the writings of John Shepherd, Lawrence Kramer, Susan McClary, Wayne Bowman, Michael Titlestad, James Clifford, John Aguilar, and Jean-Paul Sartre – see first chapter of Smith 2005).

³ Leonard Sweet speaks of “the AncientFuture phenomenon in which one seeks to both change the world and conserve the past” (1994, p. 41), and illustrates how this is evident in various forms of worship today in North America and England.

world that have adopted the Christian faith have also transformed the sounds and expressions of Christianity in many places. However, perhaps most of all, there is the massive shaping force of the popular music and recording industry, under whose influence worship songs have become a commodity for export to the global church, fuelling a drive in many churches to be less bound by older worship traditions and more progressive in their use of the latest sounds of adoration and praise emanating from new denominations and independent churches formed in the 20th century.⁴

In South Africa worship needs to be redefined as practices previously neatly contained in particular denominations and cultures combine in new multicultural and multid denominational settings. Decisions as to which forms of self-expression are discouraged, which are tolerated and which are promoted carry ideological connotations of power struggles between different groups. Furthermore, each urban generation in this democratic, increasingly consumer-driven society is growing up with its own musical styles (marketed for their age group) to define themselves by. Thus the age groups struggle to validate their own spiritual identity by trying to claim their own preferred music as the “right” worship style for churches today.

While these might appear to be musical controversies on the surface, Hugo Cole (1978) suggests that they may serve as an indicator of much larger differences in religious views: “A study of the musics of different churches could serve as a precise indicator ... suggesting which groups were ripe for union and which would resist union like similar magnetic poles” (1978, p. 92). The basic religious beliefs of two groups might be the same, but the expression of those beliefs can be very different as contrasting worldviews mingle with personal and culture-specific interpretations of spiritual significance to produce varying religious practices. Thus one might conclude with Cole that unfamiliarity with the motivations behind different church musics may well prohibit unions of diverse groups from taking place.⁵

⁴ Erik Routley noted in 1978 that with the evolution of the Christian publishing trade, “participation,” “communication” and “democracy” became primary values in the Western church, thus allowing public opinion to determine “both what will prove practical in a church and what will bring a publisher a good return on his outlay” (1978, pp. 2–3). This remains true in congregations today, where the determining role of church hierarchy has diminished in favour of what God would do through the everyday Christian in his/her church and in current society. Churches are free to choose what kind of music will be most appropriate for their own worship, and both history and the recording industry leave them no shortage of options to choose from.

⁵ An example of this can be seen in Pete Grieg’s account of his work with teenagers in British dance clubs, many of whom are drug users and come from disjunctive home environments:

However, the point of attempting to stitch together new communities from patches of different social groupings is to suture the wounds left between people who were either forcibly alienated from one another under a racist political system, or emotionally alienated from one another through changing family structures and collapsing communication systems between the different generations.⁶ Is this a vain ideal? How do churches go about choosing what they will use or discard from the worship traditions represented amongst their members? Furthermore, how does a congregation deal with the ensuing changes to its worship identity and can such changes really help to meld a diverse group of individuals into a new whole?

Throughout history and across the globe, churches (particularly those not strongly tied to long-standing religious traditions) have experienced many changes to their worship and such questions ultimately require responses particular to each church of whom they are asked. In 2000 my parents (hereafter referred to as Rev. and Mrs Smith) started a new church in Johannesburg where, as of 2003, I have been the Worship Director. What follows is a case study that charts the worship journey of this church that began with us asking ourselves these questions.

THE BIRTH OF THE NEW HARVEST CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

The New Harvest Christian Fellowship (NHCF) is a non-denominational church that was established in October 2000 in a fast-developing western suburb of Johannesburg. It evolved out of Weltevreden Methodist Church, established in 1980. Rev. Smith was the minister at this church from 1981 to 2000, when he left to pastor NHCF.⁷ The new congregation met in a warehouse for three years at a local shopping centre, then moved to a local school for a further two years. In September 2005 they moved into their own facilities in a newly-built area dominated by townhouse developments aimed at single parents and young couples. In the nearby vicinity an old age home has recently been

“We needed to try and disciple them in their own context, and to release them in ministry too without requiring that they commit cultural suicide along the way. In short, we needed to plant some kind of youth congregation where the music could be thrash guitar or pounding decks and the teaching could be relevant to the everyday questions and struggles of this new flock” (Grieg and Roberts 2004, p. 40).

This suggests that it is sometimes necessary to set up different worship environments to meet the needs of people who desire to become Christians but whose cultures and life experiences are radically different from that of people who have grown up attending church and living according to Christian principles.

⁶ See the works of Codrington, McIntosh, Mead, and Price and Associates listed.

⁷ For a detailed description of the formation of The NHCF see Chapter Three in Smith 2005.

completed, along with several exclusive estates for the wealthy and a new university campus. A large poverty-stricken informal settlement thrives a few kilometres away in the opposite direction from the estates.

Although the church membership originally consisted of people who had left Weltevreden Methodist Church to establish NHCF, the church has also attracted people from Anglican, Dutch Reformed, Catholic, African Pentecostal, Vineyard and other independent churches. As they have gathered together, many of them have been exposed to new worship sounds and spaces that are gradually redefining their worship vocabulary. These have come about for three main reasons: some of the people who joined NHCF were previously involved in music ministries at other churches; secondly, age groups that previously worshipped separately now worship together in a common venue; finally, cultures that were previously separated under the apartheid system of government are gradually filtering into each other. I will begin by presenting how NHCF developed the musical tradition that characterised it initially and how that tradition has shifted in the five years since its inception to represent a more diverse community.

THE MUSICAL GENE POOL OF NHCF

The Methodist liturgy traditionally incorporates four hymns in a service, selected from the Methodist Hymnbook.⁸ These are interspersed with prayers, Bible readings, collection of the weekly offering, and the sermon. In all the Methodist churches that the Smiths ministered in prior to coming to Weltevreden Methodist, this is what they were familiar with. Choruses were sometimes used before a service or at weekday gatherings, such as the Women's Auxiliary, Bible studies and church socials.⁹ At Weltevreden

⁸ The hymns in the Methodist hymnbook are drawn from songs written by a succession of Reformation song-writers living between the 16th and early 20th centuries. The most renowned Methodist hymn writer is Charles Wesley, who wrote over five hundred hymns. It was his brother, John Wesley, who founded Methodism in 18th-century England. Hymns written by Methodists were intended for evangelistic outreach, but were written according to high literary and theological standards (see Cusic 2002, p. 56). They consist of several verses written in common poetic meters, such as iambic pentameter, that allowed them to be sung to popular folk and theatre tunes that were known to everyday people.

⁹ Choruses are short, folk-like songs using well-known melodies and simple language that emerged from large informal revival gatherings in England, and particularly America, from the 19th century onwards. These songs developed into the church music of everyday English-speaking people in the 20th century. The choruses of the 1960s, 70s and early 80s usually consisted of one verse in very simple language about sixteen bars in length. There were songs with multiple verses (not usually more than three) and a few songs had verses and choruses.

Methodist a pattern of incorporating choruses into the service itself evolved. Factors that contributed to a departure from the Methodist order of service included the mixed church backgrounds of the initial congregation (in the early 1980s there were very few churches in Weltevreden Park, so people did not have the luxury of choosing a denomination), and the unorthodox, informal venue they were meeting in (a school staff room). According to Rev. Smith, the Yamaha keyboard his wife used to lead the singing also played a major role in altering the traditional pattern of worship as it produced “sounds that were not common to church”.¹⁰ Rev. Smith led the worship and would spend time with his wife explaining his selection of songs and the progression of moods he wanted to create. Together they chose the keyboard timbres and tempos that might best achieve these effects. Mrs Smith explains that the new sounds inspired different accompaniments to the songs being sung and helped to create new moods in worship.¹¹

Aside from the venue and the instrument used, Rev. Smith encountered new ideas about church worship in the teachings of John Wimber, with whom he attended lectures briefly at Fuller Seminary (in Pasadena, USA) in 1982 while on a “Church Growth” tour.¹² Wimber viewed worship as a form of lovemaking with the Lord – highly intimate and personal in its expression. He defined worship as singing love songs to Jesus, and asserted that one’s lifestyle is transformed by such encounters with God as one comes to express love for Him in constant, daily obedience to the promptings of His Spirit inside the individual believer. Following Wimber’s principles and allowing for flexibility in the

From the 1980s onwards songs with multiple verses, choruses, bridge sections and instrumental interludes (following the trend in much Anglo-American popular music of this period) became a common structure for church music. These songs are now generally referred to as “praise and worship” songs, rather than “choruses”.

¹⁰ This keyboard offered eight electronic timbres similar to organ, string and wind sonorities. (Personal communication with the Smiths on 12 September 2004.)

¹¹ During the Reformation period in Europe, the large variety of manuals on some organs similarly inspired variations on psalm tunes and folk melodies. Christian converts in non-European cultures also often translate European songs into different languages, and alter the music to fit their own rhythmic styles, instruments and methods of harmonising, thereby creating new versions of old songs that have a personal relevance to the new Christians.

¹² John Wimber is commonly referred to as the father of the Vineyard movement, a large group of churches spanning the globe, which have their origins in the work of Wimber (and Keith Gulliksen) from the late 1970s onwards. Wimber’s ideas on church planting (establishing new churches) and worship formed the basis on which Rev. Smith modelled the Methodist Church in Weltevreden Park and its worship philosophy. For more detailed descriptions of Vineyard worship philosophies and practices, see Jackson (1999), Carol Wimber (1999) and Venter (2000).

format and presentation of the service, the Smiths remember that the worship at Weltevreden Methodist became quite emotional at times, with people being moved to quiet tears as they sang choruses, and sometimes prayed spontaneously. According to Rev. Smith, “the new thing was the introduction of intimacy [and] tenderness through the songs. This is rare in hymns.”¹³ Mrs Smith agreed with this, stating that her own childhood and young adult experiences of singing hymns with a pipe organ filled her with “awe” and “exhilarating wonder”, but never with a sense of gentleness or intimacy from the Lord.¹⁴

Shortly after the congregation moved to their own premises in 1985 an appeal was made for more musicians and a band consisting of a guitarist, a drummer, a keyboard player, and several singers emerged. The band appeared in church on an increasingly regular basis alternating with the Smiths, who continued to lead as a duo, though with Mrs Smith leading now. The band introduced new songs both from other churches they had visited, or had once belonged to, and from the contemporary Christian songbooks being released at that time (mostly the American-based Hosanna Integrity series). Their style of playing reflected a strong influence from the popular musics of the 1960s, 1970s and early 1980s. Even hymns were adapted to be played on amplified guitars, punctuated with drumbeats. From 1990 onwards various people joined and left the band, allowing, at times, for the inclusion of wind instrumentalists, such as a flautist, clarinettist and trumpet player. People who were able to read music or had previously sung in choirs provided vocal harmonies when a choir was coordinated for special services.¹⁵ In the weekly services there were usually four singers who led the singing in unison.

The band instruments and contemporary music styles gave worship a modern feel and, according to Rev. Smith, the congregation “loved it”. The church purchased a Yamaha Clavinova, which had weighted keys and was structured like a small upright piano. It offered over one hundred instrumental timbres that Rev. Smith felt could be used to create a greater variety of moods than an organ could. This capacity also made it more attractive for use in the band. The Smiths’ worship ideas were presented in a new way by the band, with excited, joyful songs being played in a quick, loud, beat-emphasised manner, while more intimate songs were slower and quieter. Rev. Smith feels that his wife still achieved the most intimate spaces in worship with her colourful use of timbres

¹³ Notes from Rev. Smith, 11 September 2004.

¹⁴ Personal communication with the Smiths on 12 September 2004.

¹⁵ The choir was assembled from a group of volunteers for festivals like Easter and Christmas. Generally they performed only one or two items on these occasions, but they also performed two contemporary cantatas.

and the gentle style in which she played the solo instrument, but felt that she was unable to achieve the excitement of the faster praise songs in the manner that the band could. Towards the end of the 1990s the band was leading worship three out of four Sundays.

By the late 1990s there were approximately six worship leaders (five working with the band and Mrs Smith working on her own with a few singers), who took turns to select the songs and present the worship, usually trying to match the message of the songs to the sermon. They linked the songs with readings and prayers, or explanations of the progression from one song to another, while the musicians prepared their scores for the next song. Sometimes open times of prayer were encouraged, where the congregation could offer their own prayers aloud in the context of the church body. Mrs Smith points out that, even though contemporary music styles and worship songs were generally preferred by the congregation, the worship leaders did not try to get rid of old music, aiming instead to use “the right song for the right place in what [was] trying to be accomplished in the worship experience”.¹⁶ Roughly eight to ten songs were sung during a service.

Two styles of worship emerged: the quieter, more hymn-orientated worship of Mrs Smith, who added pre-1960 choruses and contemporary choruses with slow tempos; and the more up-tempo band style, using mostly choruses composed from the 1960s onwards and one or two hymns or older choruses. Songs were also adopted from the repertoire of the Teen Church band (teenagers did not attend church with the adults), but were performed in the adult music styles. In the adult band the drummer largely determined the style of the song, predominantly using ballroom dance rhythms. The result was that the songs were never very slow (like the old hymns or the latest worship songs), or as fast as the popular praise songs and dance styles of the late 1980s and 90s. The syncopations of worship songs emerging from the late 1980s onwards were generally transformed by adult singers and musicians to fit the rhythmically more meter-bound style that the adult band and the pianists had established. The tempos and rhythms of songs, combined with the manner in which worship was presented, became key elements involved in the increasing rift between the worship styles of the adult and youth bands. It was this rift in musical and worship styles that caused aging members of the youth group to either remain in the Teen Church or join other churches, illustrating the immense influence music can wield over the interaction between sectors of a

¹⁶ This quote is from an unpublished document charting the history of The New Harvest Christian Fellowship written by Mrs Smith in 2004. Although the Smiths advocated the use of choruses in worship, they also tried to include hymns in worship as many congregation members were still very fond of hymns, having grown up singing them in church.

congregation. In this case, music united similar age groups, but divided the community, eventually completely splitting the generations apart with the development of a separate church for the young adults (those who had left school), called The Ontological Shift Café. When NHCF started, the youth styles of worship had to be considered and carefully integrated and this will therefore now be described.

WORSHIP IN THE TEEN CHURCH ¹⁷

When the church building was completed in 1991 the Sunday School and Teen Church were each given a hall and, with a space of their own, they were able to establish their own bands. Parents and volunteers provided music for the Sunday School, drawing on what they considered age-appropriate material that dealt with spiritual teachings in words and imagery familiar to children. Although adults originally provided music for the Teen Church too, soon after they invited teenagers to join the band, the younger people formed a band of their own. Their style of music developed through listening to, and imitating, recordings of the new praise and worship albums from the American “Integrity” *Praise and Worship* series and the Australian “Hillsongs” series. The 16-year-old band leader was a self-taught guitarist who moved from Florida Baptist to Weltevreden Methodist to lead the band. He could not read music but was able to train a drummer, a sound operator and a bass guitarist (I played the keyboard). Enough teenagers offered to sing for several teams of singers to be formed. New songs were either pre-rehearsed by the band leader and demonstrated to the band at the practice, or were played on a tape recorder for the band to imitate. The music styles of the teenagers developed as their musical capabilities improved and the sounds coming from the worship tapes and CDs changed. Bands from other churches were also an influencing factor as peer influence provoked a drive to remain up to date with the latest worship trends.¹⁸

¹⁷ Information for this, and the following, section is drawn from the Honours study entitled *Music and Identit[ies]: Worship at The Ontological Shift Café* (Smith 2002). My personal recollections are also included.

¹⁸ Youth rallies were often hosted at a church with a large hall or sanctuary so that multiple youth groups could attend. If the local church band was good enough, they would lead the worship, otherwise a more professional band, such as Kynisa, MIC, or the Youth for Christ band would perform. Dances, short plays, and audio-visual presentations enhanced the message of a dynamic youth preacher, who challenged the teenagers to “make a stand for Jesus” (that is, not to be ashamed of living according to biblical values and introducing others to God).

The youth were suspicious of what they perceived as the adults' "rigid" form of worship, and disliked the changes that the adult band made to the songs they adopted from the youth band. The principal offence was changing the rhythm of the songs to fit ballroom beats rather than maintaining the original syncopations. The instrumentalists in the adult band generally did not listen to professional recordings of the songs and therefore, according to the younger members, performed the songs incorrectly. The youths claimed that they could not worship with the adults, because they struggled to sing the unfamiliar rhythms. Furthermore, the spoken links between songs, popular amongst the adults, were a frustration to the younger people, who were following a growing contemporary trend where one song was sung after another, with *instrumental* links between songs. Any talking on the part of the youth worship leader was accompanied by plucked guitar or a simple improvisation on the keyboard, with the result that acoustic continuity was seldom broken by silence from the instruments. In the Teen Church, Bible readings and spoken links were seldom predetermined, but rather flowed from the mood established in worship, or from what the worship leader sensed the Spirit of God was leading him to say or do at any given moment. The teenage congregation was also increasingly encouraged to pray or read scriptures at any time they felt prompted by God to do so and could worship somatically by clapping, dancing, kneeling or even lying prostrate.

As the 1990s progressed the musicians in the youth group increasingly became more capable of coping with newly released songs than the adult band could. The teenagers spent a lot of time listening to and playing music, as they generally had more time to devote to these activities than the adults, who had time-consuming occupations and family responsibilities. Most of the instrumentalists in the youth band could play more than one instrument and many of the singers could play at least one instrument.¹⁹ All

¹⁹ The differences between the musical capabilities of the younger players and the adults seem to be a reflection of social and economic changes that have taken place in society since the Second World War. From the 1950s onwards greater financial resources have been available to middle-class suburban members of society to provide luxuries, such as musical instruments and lessons, for their children. Many teenagers teach themselves to play an instrument if it is available (guitar being particularly popular). One of the advantages of living in a city is that there are many trained music teachers and experienced musicians who are easily accessible. Moreover, the recording industry is much bigger now than it was forty years ago, making recently-released music from anywhere in the Western world (the United States, the United Kingdom and Australia in particular) easily accessible. In 1998 Bill Price and Associates conducted The Youth and Family Census Profile, which included a survey of the top ten influences in the lives of South African teenagers across racial and economic divides. Their study revealed that "music is huge for today's young people. Many of them spend most

these factors produced a situation where the youth band was able to play the adult church's music (provided they had heard it played before and were not required to read it from a score, although they did struggle with hymns, which require chord changes on almost every beat), but the adult church was unable to play the youth band's music (even though there were notated versions of it available). However, it seemed that neither band really wanted to play the other's music in each other's musical styles.

The rift that emerged between the adult and youth styles of worship meant that the young adults opted to remain in the Teen Church until they were well into their twenties, so that it became referred to as the Youth Church. From 1994 the young adults started to take over the leadership of the youth from the team of adults who had been leading the Teen Church sermons and classes. A small minority of young adults moved into the adult church (most significantly Calven Celliers, who is now the assistant pastor at NHCF) and some joined other churches. In 1998, to counter this attrition, Rev. Smith offered the small evening service to the young adults, which he helped them to form into a church of their own. They christened it "The Ontological Shift Café".²⁰

THE ONTOLOGICAL SHIFT CAFÉ

The Ontological Shift Café (TheOSC) existed from 1998–2001 and was defined as "a community of disciples of Jesus living in a postmodern world" (Darryl Toerien in Smith 2002, p. 21). TheOSC was established not only to provide a place for the young adults of Weltevreden Methodist to worship, but also to reach out to an "unchurched" twenty-something age group. Music seemed to be central to the identity of the youths and therefore one of the main priorities set for TheOSC was the establishment of a band that could provide high-quality contemporary music for worship.²¹ It was hoped that "good music" would function as a draw-card for young people, and release them to experience

of their day listening to background music on CD players, walkmans, radio or music TV. No one music style dominates." The report concluded that friends and music are the top two priorities in South African teenagers' lives today.

²⁰ See Smith 2002, which is an investigation into the relationship between the identity of the members of this community and the music they used to express themselves in worship. The group's name was shortened to "TheOSC" (Thee-osc), which closely resembled the Greek word, "Theos", meaning "of God". The word "ontology" was defined as "that which is real to you", and it was understood that as one grew in one's understanding of, and relationship with, God, so one's view and experience of reality would shift.

²¹ This has not only been a local insight. Simon Frith stated that "the intensity of (the) relationship between taste and self-definition seems peculiar to popular music – it is 'possessable' in ways that other cultural forms ... are not" (Frith, 1987, p. 144).

and worship God in a musical style they understood and identified with. Venue and ambiance were also deemed important for the twenty-somethings, so services were held in a large hall with groups of people sitting around candlelit coffee tables.

Initially TheOSC grew rapidly and the free-flowing contemporary worship that took place in the candlelight was very popular. Those who preferred somatic expressions of worship had space to move at the back of the hall. As the philosophies of this satellite church shifted, however, so did its worship style. For example, monthly “Reconfiguration” evenings were introduced at which everyone gathered in a circle on the floor in the carpeted hall and spontaneous worship took place. The guitarist led these times of song and prayer, sometimes accompanied by a *djembe* drummer, singing songs that seemed appropriate to what was going on, and to what he was sensing God wanted to say or do. He was able to play without music and lined out words as the song progressed if he thought people might be unfamiliar with them. There were opportunities for people to share testimonies of what God was doing in their lives, or of what they felt He wanted to share with the community. Sometimes another person in the group would start singing a song, or suggest a song for the guitarist to lead. Bread and grape juice were laid out in the middle of the circle so that people could participate in communion when they felt ready to do so.

The band also experimented with locating themselves in different places around the hall, trying to find a place where they could be inconspicuous. Some people found this unhelpful, because they were unable to identify visually with the worship leader and band, but those who worshipped with their eyes closed were less disturbed. The introduction of the *djembe* drum (a West African drum) was welcomed by some and regarded with suspicion by others. There were fears that it was an instrument too closely tied to ancestral worship and might attract what were feared as evil spirits. Nevertheless, these views seem to have been held by the minority and the *djembe* became a regular feature of the music team.

One of the principal concerns of the TheOSC congregation was that there were no facilities for children, with the result that should the members of TheOSC start establishing families of their own, they would need to move to the Sunday morning service. However, as nothing was done to bridge the gap between the worship styles of Weltevreden Methodist and TheOSC, many TheOSC mothers brought their young children to the evening church, where they were encouraged to worship with their parents. The children did not seem to be troubled by the music, only with long periods of prayer or repetitions of songs.

The leader of TheOSC came to believe that his church's structure and mission to the postmodern world did not fit into the organisation and practices of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa and, in April 2000, TheOSC broke away to become an independent church. Its members continued to meet in Weltevreden Methodist's facilities until the bishop evicted them in September 2000. They then shared the warehouse with NHCF for a few months.

This move induced a radical change in worship style. The church had been using Weltevreden Methodist's sound equipment, and with no amplification system available people brought along home-made shakers, drums and various makeshift instruments with which to worship. A strong rhythmic emphasis evolved: someone would establish a rhythm that people could play along with, building an air of excitement out of which the worship leader would initiate a song. This was not easy because the percussive volume levels made it difficult for him to be heard. Nevertheless, the people were familiar with his leadership style and they did follow, keeping time with him on their percussive instruments. The decision was made to split into three home churches by the end of 2000 and each church took on its own form of worship, one praying and singing unaccompanied for long periods (sometimes several hours at a time), another continuing with the guitar-led worship (the worship leader was in that home church). The third group struggled to find a way of worshipping, attempting CD-led worship, prayer, and open singing (where anyone could start a song). However, according to its members, this group never really found a way of worshipping successfully.

When TheOSC disbanded in June 2001 after a disagreement between the leader of TheOSC and one of the home churches, only two people returned to The New Harvest Christian Fellowship – a young woman who was invited to become the youth pastor and myself. No one returned to Weltevreden Methodist. Reasons offered for moving to other churches included a deep struggle to worship in NHCF's style (apparently the preaching was not a problem, just the music and worship leading), and the fact that many of the group were still single and wanted to find marriage partners and there were very few people in their late teens, twenties and early thirties in either Weltevreden Methodist or NHCF. Some people just wanted to establish themselves away from the context in which they had grown up and experienced the hurt of a church community that had died.

EVOLVING THE WORSHIP IDENTITY OF NHCF

When NHCF first started in October 2000, it was housed in a warehouse at a local shopping centre. Personal amplifiers, instruments and microphones, which people brought from home, were used. However, a sound system was soon arranged and a

second-hand clavinova and drum kit were purchased. The worship could therefore continue in a similar vein to the way it had done at Weltevreden Methodist. However, it soon became evident that meeting in a warehouse would mean restructuring the services to cater for a multi-age congregation. In the first part of the service the whole church worshipped together, and an appeal was made for storytellers who would present short stories with biblical messages for the children during this family time. Various arrangements were made for the different age groups for the remainder of the service.²² The fact that different age groups were forced to worship together highlighted issues about music identity that had previously been present, but not openly dealt with. The adults tried to introduce songs that would appeal to the Sunday School and teenagers, but were unfamiliar with the type of songs that appealed to the younger generations, with the result that many of the songs chosen were either unknown to the youngsters, or too immature for the adults.

Rev. Smith noted the need to update the worship to attract younger adults to NHCF and to encourage the youth to stay at the church when they grew up. He had observed two trends amongst churches when it came to changing worship styles: either the entire existing worship team and song repertoire could be done away with and a younger band that only played contemporary music installed (thereby creating an instant change); or the changes could be introduced sensitively and gradually, hopefully creating the space for the majority of the congregation to adapt to the new songs and worship styles.

By 2003 it was decided that the Sunday School children were developmentally not in a position to worship with the adults and three men formed a Sunday School band consisting of a guitarist, a keyboard player, and a singer/worship leader. They played children's worship songs outside in the car park every second Sunday. However, the teenagers were encouraged to become involved with the music ministry alongside the adults. Many of the teenagers at Weltevreden Methodist (and all the teenagers who played in the youth band) opted not to move to NHCF and a new generation of teenagers grew up and had to be trained to play in a band. The advantage of this was that they came to NHCF with little knowledge of any other kind of worship, except what they had experienced in Sunday School. Once the new teenage musicians were accomplished enough, they were also given opportunities to lead worship or present items in church (such as dances or songs). Integrating the teenagers into the adult band enabled them to

²² After worship the children had classes outside or played in the centre play areas and the teenagers were transported to a nearby home of one of the members for classes. Later, dry walling was installed at the back of the warehouse with divisions for the Sunday School, teenagers, and mothers with babies to meet in.

gain experience by playing on a more regular basis with experienced musicians, but it also gave the band younger faces for the youth to associate with. I also began introducing more contemporary praise and worship songs and methods of linking songs, along with contemporary performance styles that the youth in particular identified with. This was done with the aid of two new musicians in their twenties who felt God had led them to join NHCF. They were familiar with both choruses and jazz and gospel worship traditions and thus had little trouble improvising and performing syncopated rhythms, while at the same time making extensive use of NHCF's existing music. They were also able to start introducing some African-language Christian songs. My classical music training and involvement with the youth bands at Weltevreden Methodist allowed us to help the band update the performance of hymns and start understanding how to perform contemporary songs in contemporary music styles.

The changes provoked various controversies. Some people found the new worship more meaningful than ever before, because there were more creative spaces for the individual to encounter God in instrumentals, and songs often flowed into one another without explanation, allowing worship to feel less controlled by another person and more personal. Others found these changes meaningless, being used to instruction from a worship leader at all times as to what to do next and why they were doing it. Many enjoyed multi-age, "family" (community) worship, with older generations finding inspiration in the passionate excitement of the youth, while the youth appreciated the guidance they received from some adults who began praying with and counselling them during worship. Some adults held a more patronising view, thinking it delightful that the youth were given a little part to play in the service, and still others felt threatened by the introduction of new songs and ways of leading worship, fearing that songs and styles of worship that were precious to them were being sidelined.²³ Anxieties amongst older generations of being unable to deal with change have required sensitive attempts to help the congregation with modern rhythms, such as saying the words together in the correct

²³ For example, the elderly attach great nostalgic value to the hymns, seeing them as signs of the era in which they grew up, sources of strength and truth that have given them hope in the struggles of life and on their spiritual journeys. They provide a familiar acoustic space in a world that some of the aged feel has moved on and left them behind. Realising that the number of hymns being sung has diminished, some of the elderly feel that they are gradually being squeezed out of church too. Some of this age group seem to feel that at this stage in their lives they cannot be expected to change to suit younger generations, but rather that the younger generations should respect long-standing traditions that have stood the test of time and are therefore elevated in their importance above the fleeting trends of contemporary society.

rhythm before singing a new song; or carefully coaching lead singers to demonstrate the song; or designing visual presentations of the words that indicate which words follow each other quickly and which words or syllables are lengthened.

One might question why it was necessary to introduce contemporary styles of worship if the teenagers at NHCF had never experienced the youth styles of worship at Weltevreden Methodist. It was clear from their regular non-participation in worship (they often had conversations amongst themselves or wrote each other notes on their cell phones to pass the time) that the adult worship styles were not engaging them. Comments on the old-fashioned style of music from some people in their twenties who visited NHCF also indicated a struggle to worship in the existing styles. Younger generations often find hymns musically and linguistically stale and experience singing them as a sign that the church is out of touch with the modern world and more interested in maintaining traditions than being relevant to society.²⁴ Choruses sung in out-of-date music styles have the same effect. The teenagers and young adults were familiar with secular popular music through television and radio and were exposed to other styles of worship through Christian friends who attended other churches. Also, as efforts were made to include the teenagers in the band and update the sound of the worship team, general youth participation increased.

Thus older songs have not been done away with at NHCF, but they have been reduced in number to make way for more contemporary songs (written from the late 1990s to the present). Modern instruments and performance techniques (such as adding instrumental introductions and bridges between hymn verses, modulating to achieve emotional climaxes, and adding more complex harmonies typical of jazz) help to update older songs without making them unrecognisable to those who have been acquainted with them for many years. Generally speaking, it seems that if the melody and rhythm are not altered, the congregation has little trouble with the band changing the timbre, dynamics, and harmonies of older songs. Tempo is more personal, with some people enjoying the space for contemplation that slowness offers and others valuing the joyful excitement of faster paces. NHCF aims to remain true to the worship styles that evolved out of the increased interest in spirituality and individuality during the 1960s in the USA and England, focusing on the individual's relationship with, and experience of, God, while at the same time trying to maintain a sense of respect for other people in the

²⁴ At NHCF it has nevertheless been found that the more hymns are sung, particularly with the challenging introduction of SATB and part singing for men and women, the more some of the younger members are gradually accepting them.

community and their preferences. At NHCF, the following criteria have been set for worship²⁵:

- ✦ Songs with sound theology;
- ✦ Songs with emotional content expressive of our deep relationship with God;
- ✦ A core expressing humility, gentleness, and reverence;
- ✦ A combination of songs this congregation has a history with and contemporary worship songs, presented in a musical style that the majority can relate to.

From what has been written thus far it might appear that contemporary praise and worship songs are only a preference of the youth. However, on introducing them it has been found that most adults aged below fifty (and some over this age) feel that their worship has been rejuvenated. Using the analogy of a dinner party, David Anderson (2004, pp. 108–110) describes the central identity that a multicultural congregation settles on as its “main dish”, but maintains that when you are inviting guests from different cultures you should provide “side dishes” that they might enjoy more. According to this analogy, NHCF has settled on worship music and styles from the 1980s onwards as its current main dish, while its side dishes include music from “by-gone eras” (which includes classical music, hymns and older choruses), “ultra-modern” songs (from the latest teenage worship albums that include electronic timbres and heavily amplified instruments), “multicultural” songs (including African, Israeli and British songs that draw both on folk music traditions and modern-day sounds), and therefore “multilingual” songs (although the meaning of all lyrics is provided in English, so that the majority of the congregation will know what they are singing). While this might seem very broad, it allows for “side dish” material to be included in the “main dish” by changing various elements of the “side dish” music (such as harmony and instrumentation) to fit the current NHCF worship music styles.

ADOPTING OTHER CULTURES INTO THE CHURCH

Multi-age worship has been the principal challenge for NHCF, but increasingly it is necessary to address the concept of multicultural worship. When two people from the African Pentecostal tradition joined the band, an opportunity to learn African and jazz performance methods and songs arose. Since the congregation is still predominantly white, these songs have been kept in the minority but are gradually increasing as NHCF hopes to bridge racial divides. Don Cusic (2002) illustrates how in the forty years following the Civil War in the United States of America, blacks established their own

²⁵ These points were presented in a Sunday sermon on 29 May 2005.

churches and whites, by and large, developed unwritten codes and practices that effectively prohibited African-Americans from joining their churches. They thus evolved separate musical traditions. Anderson's research on why black and white American Christians still struggle to attend church together in the 21st century has revealed that most church-going white Americans seek information on their faith and how to apply it to the living of their everyday lives, whereas African-Americans desire inspiration in the form of an emotional and spiritual experience that will excite them to live the Christian life.²⁶ This is apparent in a number of aspects of the church services he investigated; however, its application to worship reveals many similarities to what has been discussed here as the "structured" worship of the adults at Weltevreden Methodist versus the "freer" worship of the youth and at TheOSC. Anderson's description can be expanded to illustrate that, while the different generations at NHCF might all be of the same race, the more emotional younger age groups largely prefer inspirational styles of worship while the oldest generations prefer a clear structure. African Pentecostal churches specialise in inspirational styles of worship, often repeating short songs for lengthy periods with the congregation becoming increasingly emotional and somatic in their worship expressions.

All churches are somewhere on a continuum between information-driven and inspirational styles of worship. The older members of NHCF have been on the journey from the information-orientated traditions of Methodism to the inspiration type of intimate and emotional worship proposed by John Wimber. The youth and African worshippers lean more towards inspirational styles of worship, but thus far they have been open to including information-type songs, if they do not sound musically foreign or out of date. If a more proactive approach to becoming multicultural is to be adopted, the main dish will likely have to be adapted further to incorporate more African and African-American gospel styles of singing, thus allowing certain side dishes to become part of the main dish. Furthermore, the Australian "Hillsong" series (2003, 2004) seems to be enjoyed by black and white South African Christians alike and is also promising to be a useful tool in linking races.²⁷

Whether one is looking at different cultures or different age groups, the need to understand each other's perspectives, preferences and traditions is necessary in South

²⁶ Interview with Dr David Anderson released by the Willow Creek Association (2004).

²⁷ Personal observations suggest that the performance style of songs matters more to worshippers than the actual songs being used and the language in which they are sung. The songs from "Hillsong" are written in pedestrian English and performed by solo singers backed by a massive choir and rock band.

Africa now perhaps more than it has ever been before. There needs to be space for unique group identities to emerge, stemming from a deep appreciation of individual diversity. At NHCF the teenagers are establishing their own worship style using their own musics at the new youth group meetings on Friday evenings. There are plans to start an evening service that will cater for the tastes of creative, multicultural young adults. A mid-week communion service, using the traditional Methodist liturgy and hymns, is due to be introduced on a quarterly or monthly basis for the enjoyment of the elderly. However, when the people come together on a Sunday morning to worship as the NHCF community, it is hoped that the worship will foster a unique sense of multigenerational, multicultural identity that is both personally relevant and inclusive and appreciative of others.

REFERENCES

- Anderson, D. 2004. *Multicultural ministry: Finding your church's unique rhythm*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan.
- Codrington, G.T. 1999. *Multigenerational ministries in the context of a local church*. Unpublished Masters thesis. University of South Africa.
- Codrington, G.T. 2001. Living in an age of transition. *The edge* 1(5), 1–7.
- Codrington, G.T. 2004. Not by might, nor by power. *Today*, November, 15.
- Cole, H. 1978. *The changing face of music*. London: Victor Gollancz.
- Cusic, D. 2002. *The sound of light: A history of gospel and Christian music*. Milwaukee: Hal Leonard.
- Frith, S. 1987. *Art in pop*. London: Methuen.
- Grieg, P. & Roberts, D. 2004 (2003). *Red moon rising*. Eastbourne: Kingsway Communications.
- Jackson, B. 1999. *The quest for the radical middle: A history of the Vineyard*. Cape Town: Vineyard International Publishing.
- McIntosh, G. L. 1995. *Three generations*. Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell.
- McLuhan, H. M., Q. Fiore, and J. Agel. 1967. *The Medium is the message: An inventory of effects*. New York: Bantam.
- Mead, L. B. 1991. *The once and future church*. New York City: The Alban Institute.
- Price and Associates. *Profile of South African youth and families*. <http://www.youth.co.za/profile> [Date of access: 15 November 1998].
- Regele, M. & Schulz, M. 1995. *Death of the church*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan.
- Routley, E. 1980 (1978). *Church music and the Christian faith*. London: Collins Liturgical Publications.
- Smith, C. M. 2002. Music and identit(ies): Worship at The Ontological Shift Café. Unpublished Honours paper. University of South Africa.
- Smith, C. M. 2005. Identifying musical worship at The New Harvest Christian Fellowship. Unpublished Masters thesis, University of the Witwatersrand.
- Smith, M. J. 2004. *The history of The New Harvest Christian Fellowship*. Unpublished document.

- Strauss, W. & Howe, N. 1991. *Generations*. New York: William Morrow & Co.
- Strauss, W. 1997. *The fourth turning*. New York: Broadway Books.
- Sweet, L. 1994. *Faithquakes*. Nashville: Abingdon Press.
- Sweet, L. 1999. *Aqua church: Essential leadership arts for piloting your church in today's fluid culture*. Loveland, Colorado: Group.
- Titlestad, M. F. 2003. Making the changes: Representations of jazz in South African literature and reportage. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand.
- Venter, A. 2000. *Doing church: Building from the bottom up*. Cape Town: Vineyard International Publishing.
- Webber, R. E. 1997. *Renew your worship: A study in the blending of traditional and contemporary worship*. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson.
- Wimber, C. 1999. *John Wimber: The way it was*. London: Hodder & Stoughton.
- Wolf, M. 1992. *A thrice-told tale: Feminism, postmodernism, and ethnographic responsibility*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.

DISCOGRAPHY

- Hillsong Live Worship: Hope* 2003. Castle Hill NSW: Hillsong Music Australia. HMA CD163.
- Hillsong: For All You've Done* 2004. Castle Hill NSW: Hillsong Music Australia. HMA CD178.

THE MUSICIANS BEHIND BARS: CAN MUSIC HELP RENEW IDENTITIES?

*Zoliswa Twani, Walter Sisulu University,
Department of Music Education*

ABSTRACT

This essay is based on work conducted at Umtata prison in 2003. Using Foucault's theory of the "panopticon", I investigate the extent to which music activities subvert the watchfulness of prison authorities. I also investigate the way in which music encourages offenders to transcend their prisoner status, while modifying their behaviour for reintegration into the society as reformed citizens. Furthermore, the essay shows how prisoners make use of the structured music practices in prison as a means by which some kind of education can be acquired and rehabilitation effected. I argue that music can significantly alter and encourage offenders to transcend their "prisoner" sense of self, help them generate a new kind of identity as rehabilitated inmates, and facilitate their rehabilitation and reintegration into the society.

INTRODUCTION

In this essay I explore the role of music as a tool towards successful rehabilitation of offenders at Umtata prison. Using Foucault's theory of the "panopticon", I examine the way the offenders at Umtata prison use music activities imposed by authorities as a means to rebuild their fragmented and repressed identities, thus subverting the watchfulness of the prison system. Also of critical importance is the extent to which such music activities endeavour to transform and liberate offenders to be rehabilitated citizens who can be reintegrated into society safely and successfully.

BACKGROUND

The essay is a result of an empirical study undertaken in collaboration with offenders (inmates)¹ and correctional officials at Umtata Prison, Umtata, Eastern Cape Province of

¹ In the Department of Correctional Services' *White Paper on Corrections in South Africa* (2005), prisoners are no longer referred to as "inmates" but as "offenders".

South Africa. The Department of Correctional Services' (DCS) 2003/2004 *Annual Report* records that the prison population in South Africa in March 2004 was 189 748, and that of these 63% were "juveniles"² below 25 years of age (p. 11). This alarmingly high proportion of youths in prisons provided the moral justification for my original interest in this topic, which I pursued in a project at Masters level (Twani 2002). As a music educator I have also worked for the DCS at Umtata prison as a music advisor, adjudicator at competitions, and counsellor for young offenders and women offenders. Through this work I was able to observe the musical life at Umtata prison, which is quite rich and takes the form of gospel and choral music for female, male, juvenile and mixed choirs, and traditional music such as *isicathamiya*, *ukudlal'imfene*, *intlombe* and *indlamu*.

LITERATURE SOURCES

The literature reviewed consists of government-generated sources from the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) such as policy guidelines on Offender Care and Development, keynote addresses by the former minister of DCS, Ben Skosana, as well as annual reports from the DCS and the Judicial Inspectorate of Prisons. Other sources of data include journal articles and observations at local and provincial music competitions, cultural festivals, religious services, celebrations and commemoration of events in prison, where music features quite prominently. Interview transcripts with two prison officials and six inmates who are soloists in, and some leaders of, Umtata prisoners' choirs are other sources of information that I found quite useful.

REHABILITATION PROCESSES IN SOUTH AFRICAN PRISONS

Rehabilitation processes in prisons in present-day South Africa are premised on the restorative justice approach to the restoration and reintegration of offenders into society. The approach is future-oriented and fundamentally non-punitive. It seeks to heal the offender as a person with an inherent sense of responsibility and shame, who needs not be ostracised, but helped. In launching the restorative justice programme in 2001, Skosana emphasised the importance of the community and its involvement in correcting the offending behaviour by equipping offenders with knowledge, skills and attributes that would enable their successful reintegration into their communities as law-abiding citizens, thus ensuring safer communities. The suggested approaches involve a number of interventive cultural and educational programmes introduced by the Department of Correctional Services (DCS) in South African prisons, such as the

² Now referred to as, "young offenders".

National Offenders' Choir Competitions, Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET); Vocational Training Programme; Correspondence Studies; Occupational Skills Training Programme; Mainstream Education towards successful rehabilitation of offenders (DCS, 2003 / 2004). My concern here is with the National Offenders' Choir Competitions (NOCC).

MUSIC AS A TOOL FOR REHABILITATION IN SOUTH AFRICAN PRISONS

The National Offenders' Choir Competitions was launched as a biennial event on 10 September 1997 in Randburg. This has already become an important music tool for the DCS for the attainment of successful rehabilitation endeavours (Skosana 2003, p. 7), but their effectiveness has not been evaluated and needs investigation. The first national competition was held in 1998 at the Linder Auditorium, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, with two main sections, traditional music and choral music. The traditional music section is where a variety of traditional music and dances from African cultures are featured. The choral section features both vernacular and Western music pieces by female, male, juvenile and mixed choirs.

The National Offenders' Choir Competition has become a popular attraction in government circles and seems to have created a platform for the participants to showcase their talents. The 2003 offenders' choir competitions drew about 10 000 offenders as choristers in the various choirs from all over South Africa. The biennial competitions have proved to be very popular, not only among prisoners and the DCS officials, but also with the community outside prisons. At the Good Hope Centre in Cape Town in 2003 the competition was attended by dignitaries who included Ministers from other government departments, Premiers from different provinces, the Mayor of Cape Town, Members of Parliament, a judge, researchers involved with DCS, members of non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations, as well as friends and family members of inmates. Skosana (2003, p. 7) sees this move as one of the success areas in that the involvement of the community results in transference of skills between the communities and empowerment for DCS staff members and inmates. The conductor of the Umtata choir, Mrs K.J. Mlandu, for example, is a music teacher with a degree in music and her assistant is an inmate. A former assistant choir conductor, who was a prison official registered for the degree of BMus Education at the then University of Transkei (now called Walter Sisulu University) to further develop her music skills, but has since relocated.

Within this new direction music and in particular the competition have succeeded in attaining the set objectives (DCS Annual Report 2003/2004). These are the "visible"

teamwork and interpersonal relations that develop among the offenders and officials; the restoration of the self-esteem and confidence of inmates all seem to bear testimony to the achievements mentioned above. According to Nthabiseng Hoho (personal communication, 12 June, 2003), “since the involvement of the community, in particular Umtata Christian Church³, the complaints and grievances from offenders have decreased. A month can pass by without a single complaint.” Donald Xishe (personal communication, 12 June 2003) said, “Here at Umtata prison, we no longer worry about escapes of prisoners, our appreciation goes to you people of Umtata Christian Church.”

Whether the sound behaviour of offenders is attributable to religious interventions and the panoptic eye – that is, the strict control and surveillance of the movements of offenders by the officials as they ferry the inmates to these competitions – only time will tell. Nevertheless, Lindela Mangwane, the former leader of The Peacemakers said that, when he was going to perform, he just forgot about being a prisoner until they were informed by officials to board the bus again for a trip back to prison (personal communication, 13 June 2003). Sibongile Dikinda, on the other hand, mentioned that the only thoughts that would occupy his mind would be related to the pleasure of “seeing people and the world once again, since when in prison the only thing you see are the walls around you and the sky” (personal communication, 14 September 2005).

FOUCAULT’S PANOPTICISM AND THE MUSICIANS BEHIND BARS

Ideas for framing my research theoretically are mainly drawn from Michel Foucault’s principle of the panopticon or panopticism within his discourse analysis of discipline, punishment and incarceration in prisons (Foucault 1978, p. 8). Foucault’s notion of panopticism – a theory of surveillance, and a technology of power – emerged out of Bentham’s proposition for a model prison.⁴ Panopticism as an instrument of power leads me to relate it to the way music practices and performances are used in prison. While inmates may be aware that they are constantly under observation and scrutiny as they continue to perform and participate in music activities in prison, only the correctional officials can make value judgments regarding change or not in the behaviour of inmates. Under these circumstances, panopticism and the music activities become also a political

³ Umtata Christian Church holds weekly religious services, spiritual and scriptural discussion meetings and counselling sessions for offenders at Umtata prison, which are punctuated with chorus and singing of hymns in *isiXhosa* and English.

⁴ The panopticon was a model prison proposed by Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832), a utilitarian philosopher and theorist of British legal reform (Foucault 1978, Chapter 1). It functioned as a round-the-clock surveillance machine, designed to ensure that no offender could ever see the “inspector” who conducted surveillance from a privileged central location, the control base.

technology of the body, and where power relations have an immediate hold upon the body, “they invest it, mark it, train it, force it to carry out tasks, to perform at ceremonies, and to emit signs” (Foucault 1978, p. 25).

I argue that offenders involved in music activities in prison, although they are not completely panoptic-free, are panoptic-conscious and panoptic-wise. They are “free” to participate in music activities and music competitions in and out of prison and *perform* to the very people from whom they are under surveillance. They can also take their performance outside prison and show themselves in ways other prisoners cannot. They are still “behind bars” because they are performing offenders, but have a certain freedom that enables their transformation into performing inmates, and therefore, musicians, even though inhabiting the space of restriction of the prison system. Thus despite the repression, they have the opportunity to take control over their destinies as developed and emancipated musicians within the paradigm of power and surveillance. It is in this sense that I regard them as panoptic-wise musicians, able to make use of music programmes in prison to alter their situation and lifestyle and acquire skills. Some of the inmates at Umtata prison have considerable music experience, including training as solo singers; the assistant conductor of the Umtata Offenders’ Choirs is himself an inmate at this point in time.

I suggest that the music activities in prison and the DCS’s National Offenders’ Choir Competition (NOCC) could become an instrument of power that instead of merely controlling the individual offender engages and allows the offender/chorister to invest in that control to such an extent that it eventually becomes a life-changing activity. Thus, a strategy (choralism) introduced by those in power as part of a programme of discipline and control, contributes towards the rehabilitation of inmates. Moreover, consideration for parole and amnesty of offenders usually includes, among other things, their involvement and participation in programmes such as the National Offenders’ Choir Competitions (NOCC). There is even currently a view in DCS that offenders should be accredited and certificated for their involvement in such development programmes within the prison system (Department of Correctional Services, *White Paper* 2005, p. 3).

The notion of the panopticon was derived from utilitarian thinking, which perhaps filters down to the motivation for the prison competitions, in that one of the doctrines of utilitarianism was that the actions of governments should be judged simply by the extent to which they promoted the “greatest happiness of the greater number” (Van Lill, 2004). During the choir competitions, celebrations, festivals and other events where music features prominently in prison, offenders on the one hand seem to benefit the most; they are in the limelight and everyone depends on them. I have witnessed them, in turn, displaying a lot of responsibility, respect, determination and willingness to learn,

participate and win. On the other hand, the prison police show a lot of care and love for the inmates, since they also receive recognition for their hard work. Skosana noted in 2003 that no escaping of offenders has ever been reported during these competitions since their inception in 1997, despite the fact that more than 10 000 offenders are usually involved (Skosana 2003, p. 3). If the DCS is trying to render prison a liberating and enlightening experience for “the greater number” of offenders, choir competitions and other music activities are probably a good way of doing this.

Panopticism as a political investment of the body is bound up with complex reciprocal relations that operate through the microphysics of power as a strategy for domination and inducing performance and productivity – “docility-utility” (Owage 2003, p. 181) among individuals or groups. In one way or another, the system in which the musicians behind bars operate makes them become docile human beings (they have to continually abide by the prison laws and regulations), but effective in respect of what they will produce as skilled inmates/musicians. When they practice for long hours, they cannot complain and they are not in a position to suggest break times or enquire about lunch and other privileges and rights, because they are usually put in their places and told “*yazini ukuba ningamabanjwa*” (isiXhosa = “you must know that you are prisoners”) (Sandiso Cheko, personal communication, 14 September, 2003). By the end of 2004 Umtata Offenders’ Choirs were still the reigning national champions with five trophies from the 2003 National Offenders’ Choir Competitions. They are the current provincial champions, while Gauteng Offenders’ Choir is the reigning national champion since 16 February 2006.

I have witnessed them practising daily around the clock, usually from 09h00 to 14h00, an hour before they are supposed to be locked into their cells, especially near the time of the competitions. By the same token, criteria for involvement, when and where the competitions are going to be, what the repertoire is going to be, the schedule of events and so on are the domain of correctional officials. The choristers of Umtata Offenders’ Choir may never know why the competition was postponed from August 2005 to 16 February 2006, even if some may have lost the opportunity to participate and learn from the experience. The officials actually control the activities and the programme, while the individual offenders seem to be displaying integrity and autonomy regarding their own participation.

THE IMPACT OF MUSIC IN THE LIVES OF SELECTED CHORISTERS/INMATES

I interviewed six participants who are soloists in the Umtata prisoners’ choirs on 14 September 2003 from which an analysis of transcripts has been possible. My method of

analysing the data was largely informed by a thematic content analysis approach of the interview transcripts. Emergent themes relate to the appropriation of music as a “technology of the self” (DeNora 2000, p. 62), music as a survival strategy, music as an aid to discovery of music talents and potential, music as a key to restoration and development of living skills even beyond prison, as well as music for career advancement.

Pumlani Mbali, a bass soloist, talks about the “consoling effect” of music and the power of music in changing the lives of inmates. The latter refers to “confessions” made by inmates to him who, after listening to music, felt some sense of relief and renewed feelings of hope, comfort and escape from suicidal tendencies. They listen mostly to church hymns and gospel songs, the lyrics of which, according to Pumlani (personal communication, 14 September, 2003) touch the hearts of inmates. Subsequently, these inmates became members of the choirs. Ntsaphokazi Njongo, a soprano soloist, echoes similar views “in music I found a way to relieve my anger and bitterness. Each time I came from choir practice I was satisfied” (personal communication, 14 September 2003). In Tia DeNora’s sense (2000, p. 58) music is used as an accomplice in aesthetic agency for the individual to attain, enhance and maintain the desired states of feelings, body energy, needs and wishes, such as relaxation and management of stress.

Sibongile Dikinda (personal communication, 14 September, 2003), on the other hand, articulates the transformational powers of music in changing perceptions and attitudes through his personal slogan: “*umculo uyalambisa*” and “*umculo uyaphilisa*” (isiXhosa = “music can make you hungry” and “music heals”, respectively). This refers to the time he was at school and would run away from music participation at school because they would have endless practices and would go home well after other learners were at home, and also to the fact that a number of “musicians” he knew from his village and nearby towns were always penniless and seemingly thought of as people who were idle and too lazy to work and would therefore be poor for the rest of their lives. Since becoming the leader of the all-male *isicathamiya* group he has come to learn a lot about careers, job opportunities and income-generating ventures for musicians and has realised that “*umculo uyaphilisa*” (you can earn a living from it). All these aspects basically refer to music as a resource on the level of the individual, an active element in engineering the self, self-identity and caring for the self (DeNora, 2000, p. 63).

To Sandiso Cheko, a tenor soloist, participation in music activities in prison was a survival strategy against boredom, stress and promoted living a trouble-free life, self-control and self-restraint from fights and further criminal charges, which could extend one’s initial sentence. Thandiswa Magwa even goes further to say, “*mna ndimdala, uyandibona nawe*” (isiXhosa = “you can see that I am old”), but she joined the choir to

“take her mind off things” and to avoid boredom. Ntsaphokazi, Sandiso and Sibongile similarly marvelled at their newly discovered talent and potential as soloists of the “opera music style” and “*isicathamiya*” for the latter, which would never had materialised and become known to them had it not been for their involvement in the prison choirs. The additional benefits for Sibongile are his acquired leadership qualities, choreography skills and potential as a songwriter, since he composed about five songs for the group. This is a clear demonstration of the power of music to predicate the desire to create rather than to destroy, which to Skosana (2003, p. 7) “is the needed ingredient required of a rehabilitated offender”.

Grace Nicky (1993, p. 5) in her study carried out with the Geese Theatre Company in prisons confirms this view as direct benefits to participants to raise the potential for change in the individual and ultimately effect societal change through the use of the arts in prisons. Not a single one of the interviewees expressed negative views about music (instead they wish to be taught music in prisons), which I find interesting, given that on the outside most of them had nothing to do with music since their school days and the unhappy memories of music there. Sandiso “ran away” from music activities because of “ill-treatment” from the conductor, while Ntsaphokazi who did not care about music, and Sibongile sang for the first time in prison. The exceptions are Lindela Mangwane, who sang in a family choir, and Pumlanzi Mbali, who learnt music at a teacher’s training college and as a teacher took it upon himself to conduct the school choir and choirs from a neighbouring primary school.

The interviews also reveal some ideas about the restorative nature of music coupled with acquiring and learning some music skills, such as solo singing, conducting and reading tonic sol-fa by those involved. Pumlanzi discovered counselling skills and the therapeutic effect of music, probably stemming from his professional training, especially when he “worked” with new convicts through listening to music and discussing the lyrics of the songs (usually gospel songs and hymns, as well as some traditional songs). Ntsaphokazi, on discovering her music talent, simultaneously acquired some self-actualising skills for self-restraint and self-control after her spells of anger and bitterness. She constantly made reference to this and her “recent friendly personality” since she realised she “was good in something”. Sibongile in his interview also constantly alludes to such self-actualising skills; for him, even the name of the group – The Peacemakers – was enough to make him modify his periodic emotional outbursts. These are sentiments to which Sandiso insistently referred to as self-policing: “*kufuneka ubelipolisa lakho ejele*” (isiXhosa = “you have to be your own policeman while in the prison”), learning to be patient with people generally and avoiding fighting when conflict situations arose, otherwise one could face an extended sentence.

Participation in music activities in prison seemingly yielded some spin-offs in terms of offenders' special desires and self-confidence for further career advancement in music and other vocations for those involved. Pumlan, for example, had some music background before incarceration and is very much concerned about the lack of education and music teaching in prisons, where there are a lot of talented inmates. In the same vein Ntsaphokazi even wishes for musically semi-literate officers to impart skills and knowledge to inmates. Both are resolute in continuing with formal education in music, while Sibongile insists on a performance career. Ntsaphokazi said, "*Ilizwi lam le-opera lindenze ndabangumntu okweziphambili iindawo, kuleminhla ndiculela izikhulu, ooPresidanti nabaphathiswa belizwe* (isiXhosa = "because of my opera voice I have suddenly become an important person, I have sung before the President and Ministers of the country, I never knew I can be famous through music"). I can even speak in English." All of them expressed gratitude to their conductor, Mrs Mlandu, who inspired and encouraged them. Most interviewees constantly praised prison officials and conductors for "choosing" (prescribing) songs with sacred texts, because the songs fill them with joy, and give them peace and hope as they perform. "They make you want to change and be a real person" (Sibongile, personal communication, 14 September 2003).

Let me conclude by highlighting some issues raised by three ex-offenders, Lindela, Thandiswa and Sandiso. Lindela, who left the prison in December 2003, is the only one of the three who is still involved in music. He has recorded a demo compact disk with 27 gospel songs at EMI music studios and has also benefited from the DCS Grahamstown prison as a coach of the *isicathamiya* group. While life after prison for Thandiswa and Sandiso did not involve music, they both unanimously felt that their involvement in the prisoners' choirs was a springboard to their newly acquired lifestyles, aspirations and values, thus reinventing their identities. Thandiswa acquired skills in interior decorating and tuck-shop management while in prison. This experience earned her a post as a labourer, a tuck-shop manager at Umtata Christian School and later as a manager of a bed-and-breakfast at Kokstad until her untimely death on 18 November 2004. Sandiso, on the other hand, a multi-talented youngster, is currently an entrepreneur selling his own greeting cards and posters as a self-taught graphic artist. He is also working as a self-employed video and camera photographer with a studio at *Nggeleni* village, where he develops his own photographs with a computer. Hoho (personal communication, 14 September 2003) confirmed, "Whenever training opportunities came up, we always make sure that those who sing in the choirs are given first preference, because we know their attitude and that they are respectful, so they will not disappoint us. We make sure that they learn everything that will help them after their term."

The interview transcripts used in this essay provided me with an understanding of the determination of the musicians behind bars to utilise the educational and recreational programmes to which they are exposed to reconstruct their lives. The analysis also provided me with the motivation to further study the way in which music is used in prisons in South Africa.

CONCLUSION

The choral groups in prison may not be wearing leg irons or prison uniform when they perform, but even when attired in matching dresses and suits, they are shackled to their image as singing offenders, an image that is perhaps more difficult to escape than prison itself. Foucault's theory of panopticism underscores the above concerns in terms of the choristers labelled and stigmatised as prisoners or even performing prisoners as they ascend the stage. At a performance at the then University of Transkei (now Walter Sisulu) in one of the graduation ceremonies in May 2004, as soon as one person realised that the performers were indeed prisoners, the word spread quickly among the spectators. No matter how many times and at which prestigious events the prison groups perform and shine, they are still under surveillance, controlled by the power structures hovering above them in and out of prison as musicians behind bars.

Whether the novelty of musicians behind bars will be sustainable throughout and beyond imprisonment is debatable. While Foucault's theory of panopticism looks at the nature of prisons and how power structures operate, Freire's theory (1970) of *conscientização* (Portuguese = conscientisation) espouses notions of freedom through the alternative use of the NOCC by which singing offenders can negotiate their capabilities, desires and wants as rehabilitated offenders with skills. I therefore conclude that if offenders have the capacity to change and be in control of their lives and situation through the NOCC (both inside and after leaving prison), which capacity they seem to demonstrate during the period of the competitions, the NOCC might as well be used as a conscientising agent, for critical action and reflection, "praxis"⁵, for them to develop new and improved skills for successful reintegration into the community.

It is my view that, as long as inmates are involved, conscientised and given opportunities to choose, the chances of the generation of new identities, self-images, self-esteem and confidence, as well as improvement and emancipation, are prolonged and become sustainable provided the platform of Offenders' Choirs continues to exist in South African prisons.

⁵ A key principle and method in Paulo Freire's theory of *conscientização* (1993).

REFERENCES

- DeNora, T. (2000). *Music in everyday Life: Soundtrack, self and embodiment in everyday life*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Department of Correctional Services. 2003/2004. Annual report judicial inspectorate of prisons 2003/2004.
- Department of Correctional Services, 2005. White paper on corrections in South Africa. <http://www.dcs.gov.za>. [Date of Access: 27 July 2005].
- Foucault, M. 1978 (1995). *Discipline and punish. The birth of the prison*. 2nd edition. New York: Vintage Books.
- Freire, P. 1970 (1993). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. London: Penguin Books.
- Nicky, G. 1993. Arts-related activities in prisons, *Convergence*, 26 (3), 65–71.
- Olwage, G. 2003. Discipline and choralism: The birth of musical colonialism, in A J Randall (ed.), *Music, power, and politics*. New York and London: Routledge, 25–46.
- Policy Document – Department of Correctional Services, 2001. Restorative justice – Healing the wounds of crime, working for a safer community. <http://www.gov.za/correctionalservices/department> [Date of access: 12 February, 2004].
- Skosana, B. 2003a. Keynote address by the minister of correctional services, Mr Ben Skosana, MP, at The National Prisoners' Choir Competitions, Good Hope Centre, Cape Town, 8 May 2003. <http://www.go.za/correctionalservices/department> [Date of Access: 10 February 2004].
- Skosana, B 2003b. Keynote address by the minister of correctional services, Mr Ben Skosana, MP, at the national youth day celebrations in Pietermaritzburg Management Area. 17 June 2003. [http:// www.gov.za/coretionalservices/department](http://www.gov.za/coretionalservices/department) [Date of access: 10 February 2004].
- Twani, Z. 2002. *The history and the music of the Peacemakers*. Unpublished MMus. (Music Education) Thesis. Pretoria: University of Pretoria.
- Van Lill, D. 2004 Encyclopaedia Britannica Ultimate Reference Suite 2004 CD-ROM. 1-160.

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- Inmates** – a term widely used in South African prisons by both correctional officers and offenders to refer to offenders. However, the term “offender” has been the official term since 09 February 2006 according to the White Paper on Corrections.

Isicathamiya – is an *a cappella* singing style that originated from the South African Zulus. The word means “on tip-toes” or “in a stalking approach”, which contrasts with an earlier name for Zulu a cappella singing, *mbube*, meaning “lion”. The change in name marks a transition in the style of the music: traditionally, music described as “mbube” is sung loudly and powerfully, while *isicathamiya* focuses more on achieving a harmonious blend between the voices. The name also refers to the style’s tightly-choreographed dance moves that keep the singers on their toes. *Isicathamiya* choirs are traditionally all male. The roots of the style reach back to before the turn of the 20th century, when numerous men left the homelands in order to search for work in the cities. Today, *isicathamiya* competitions in Johannesburg and Durban take place on Saturday nights, with up to 30 choirs performing from 8 pm to 8 am the following morning.

Uhubhe – one of the South African traditional dance styles which is widely performed and practised in the rural areas of the Eastern Cape. It is performed to the accompaniment of recorded *mbaqanga* music. This dance style originated with mine workers who work in the mines and go back to their homes in the rural areas for holidays. It is characterised by brightly coloured tattered type of skirts and “tekies” (running shoes) for all performers, both men and women. The most common main colours are red and blue mixed with white, green and yellow.

Mbaqanga – is a style of South African music that is usually sung by people from rural areas. By the middle of the 1950s the evolving indigenous South African music exploded in popularity, given its increased accessibility to a massively growing urban population. A typical area was the township of Sophiatown near Johannesburg, which had grown since the 1930s into an area of new urban lifestyles for black city dwellers. Its uncertain legal status as a “freehold” area, and its proximity to the urban centre of Johannesburg, Sophiatown attracted adventurous performers of new music and became a seed-bed for the rapidly developing black musical culture. Thus *marabi* and *kwela* have started to come together into what is broadly thought of as *mbaqanga*. Singing stars such as Miriam Makeba, Dolly Rathebe and Letta Mbuli created a large base of fans. Famous *mbaqanga* performers included Mahlatini and the Mahotella Queens and the Soul Brothers.

Intlombe – In other areas this style is called by different names such as *emgcobeni*, *etshotshweni* or *esigcobeni*. There are three different types of *intlombe*. There is one for boys only, one for boys and girls and the traditional meeting for *amagqirha* (isiXhosa = divine healers). In the context of Umtata prison *intlombe* is the one adopted by divine healers. It features spirited dances of *amagqirha* (divine healers) to the accompaniment of songs for healing.

Indlamu – is a traditional Zulu dance from South Africa where the dancer lifts one foot over his head and brings it down hard, landing squarely on the music's downbeat. Typically, two dancers in warrior's pelts perform *indlamu* routines together, shadowing each other's moves perfectly. It is also often referred to as a "Zulu war dance".

SWEDEN IN PLAY WITH SOUTH AFRICA: PERSONAL MUSICAL EXPERIENCES IN POSTCOLONIAL PERSPECTIVES

*Stig-Magnus Thorsén, Department of Music and Drama,
Göteborg University, Sweden*

ABSTRACT

People from Sweden and South Africa have made music together for hundreds of years. Towards the end of the 20th century an increased Swedish interest in South African music resulted in a comprehensive musical exchange. But what motives were behind these encounters? How did the Swedes perceive African music? In order to investigate these and similar questions, three Swedish musicians were interviewed regarding their experiences of making music with the “other”.

The study was based on postcolonial perspectives, which made apparent that many Western attitudes described in such literature (exotic, stereotypical) partly imprinted the relation and the cooperation with the South Africans. But the study also pointed towards personal motives and reasoning that made the stance of the Swedes more complicated. Obviously social and societal issues intersected with personal attitudes. Seeking difference was nurtured both by a wish to find genuine music and as a matter of musical development.

INTRODUCTION

Ever since the first European contacts with South Africa, Swedes have been involved. Connected to the early Swedish presence, we find musical accounts, be it judgements on indigenous music or on the music that the visitors brought with them (Berg 1997). Musical interaction has grown since the 17th century and intensified from the 19th century. Missionaries, anthropologists, educators, providers of international aid and, not least, independent musicians have taken part in South African musical practice. The increasing World Music movement is part of this ongoing story of Swedish-South African musical interactions.

This essay emanates from a curiosity about how the Swedish participants perceived their role identity. It will concentrate on the most recent decades, which have been dominated by, on the one hand, political cooperation and, on the other hand, exchange based on private initiatives or civil society actions (churches and NGOs). The cooperation has revolved around musical exchange with purely musical aspirations and/or with extra-musical or political ambitions. Most often the Swedish participants' personal engagement was in line with government goals. After WWII up to 1994 Sweden announced a clear anti-apartheid policy and acted accordingly, with sanctions against the South African government and support to underground resistance movements in SA, which in many cases worked with culture as weapons. It is difficult to delimit these late 20th-century endeavours from the earlier Christian missions, as new trends in mission work mixed with the ethos of foreign aid, development and solidarity.¹

From 1970 and onwards many Swedish music groups toured in South Africa. This was followed by a growing number of South African "freedom songs" (mostly in Makwaya style) in the repertoire of hundreds of Swedish church, school and solidarity choirs (Sellström 2002, p. 726). Renowned Swedish rock groups formed another musical wing that joined the "Free Nelson Mandela" movement. Because of political restrictions many South African musicians also came to – or even settled in – Sweden. In most cases the work together was imprinted more by ideology than music.

What happened in these musical encounters? A battery of questions was raised that touched on roles, agency, motives and aesthetic values. How did partners value their counterpart's music? Were they part of the bigger dynamic interplay, in the same way as the colonial past imprinted "North" and "South", societies, cultures and individuals reciprocally?

I decided to mould some key thoughts, turn them into research questions and interview persons who had recently cooperated musically with South Africans. This method emphasised the individual person's perception of his or her role identity in the specific encounter with South Africans. The persons interviewed also had a social identity based on culture and society entailing a shared perspective on South African music. Thus a dual perspective imprinted the study. The overall purpose was to understand the

¹ Besides, a minority of musicians worked with South African musicians totally outside the "politically correct" agenda, which in many cases lead to a collaboration with the apartheid institutions. International sanctions towards South Africa were supposed to include cultural cooperation. However, Swedish musicians (and sportsmen) accepted invitations from the SA government and took part in officially staged functions.

ambivalence in attitudes and agency expressed and negotiated in a meeting between Swedes and South Africans.

MY EXPERIENCES OF INTERACTION

During the 1990s I worked with a foreign aid agency (Swedish Sida), channelling funding and expertise to music education NGOs in South Africa. In my work I sensed expectations both of me as a representative for Sweden and the development aid agency, and personally as a European with all the possible ramifications of that. My specific commission gave me a certain role identity that permeated many decisions in my work. I found support for this notion in an earlier study of missionaries' images of African music (Thorsén 2005). Obviously, the nature of a commission affects the outlook and attitude of a person. In hindsight I was struck by the various positions I had to take in order to understand conflicting values. Accordingly, our South African partners sometimes contested our assessments, and vice versa.

The effect of my own and my colleagues' pre-understanding or prejudices became evident in our assessment of musical quality and musical function. It was often astonishing to see what music represented and what it meant in the ears of the counterpart. Even if the music was equally well known to both parties, differences in norms and value systems became obvious. Music unknown to my ears often produced major surprises, not only regarding intrinsic musical features, but to a high degree also regarding extrinsic values, functions and perceptions. Some differences in values, ethics or aesthetics were easily surmountable; in other cases, they were antagonistic. I sometimes ended up in a dilemma between "sense and sensibility" when considering a piece of music. For ideological reasons I should not have liked it, as the music was, for instance, exaggerating primitivism, exoticism or tribalism. But as a result of aesthetic feelings on which I had not reflected sufficiently, I could not resist the music's enchantment.

My subordination (questioning, or resistance) to the commission became part of my perception of other persons with whom I worked. I had to make up my mind on what stance I took regarding human standards, ethical norms and personal motives. Along the way my own questioning of what I represented became more evident. This in turn prompted wider investigations of the historical tradition and the geopolitical framework (Thorsén 2002, 2004). Literature on global cultural encounters fuelled many ambivalent attitudes that I shared with the Swedish team.

THE PERSONAL VERSUS THE GEOPOLITICAL

This study will apply both a micro and a macro perspective. At the micro level we will find personal formulations that someone relates to regarding personal experiences. On the macro level the findings have a bearing on social, cultural or geopolitical relations between partners. In a person's accounts of experiences and the effects of encounters with the other, the two levels are usually mixed. I found this in my studies on missionaries (Thorsén, 2005). On the one hand, the missionaries claimed that their perception was that the benefits of mission work were tangible and reliable, while scholars later on contested this position and remarked that, if one raised one's head above the personal horizon, it would be obvious that judged over time and a wider context, the mission work also had many drawbacks. Generally we can argue that it is reasonable to assume that a more detailed study gives results of a greater certainty, but it has a more limited applicability.

This investigation departs from the theory that the two perspectives are mixed in real life. Holland *et al.* (1998, p. 8ff) point out the interaction between the collective aspect (cultural identity) and the personal aspect (individual identity) in forming a person's total identity. They claim that the two aspects work together.

Implementing the dual perspective entails that, on the one hand, I use interviews with persons about their perception of their role as musicians and so on, while on the other hand, I try to understand underlying general assumptions that underpin a person's pre-understanding of the encounter. Such assumptions can stem from a hegemony of information and images or political rhetoric. For instance, the issue of ethnicity or development that Swedes in general encounter in schools, mass media and churches influences the personal point of departure in the encounter. Consequently, I will start below with an overview of aspects that I have used for understanding the general geopolitical prerequisites for intercontinental relations, before I enter into the empirical part.

AFRICA - HORRIFYING OR IDYLIC?

The relations between African and Western countries are often discussed from postcolonial perspectives. Such perspectives address the political, cultural and aggregated experiences of the encounter. The theories may be built on personal accounts, but are generalised to a culture, a nation, or a continent.

It is a perspective that "attacks the status quo of hegemonic economic imperialism, and the history of colonialism and imperialism, but also signals an activist engagement with

positive political positions” (Young 2001, p. 58). A core issue of such a perspective is the role of knowledge and artistic expressions in the study of power relations. Agawu’s discussion on “[t]onal harmony as colonising force” (2003, p. 8) is one explanation of how music can act on a political arena – beyond the intrinsic aspects of music. The postcolonial background elucidates many of the factual rationales for encounters that I found in my work in South Africa: Christian mission, interest in the exotic, seeking for differences, solidarity and poverty alleviation. Postcolonial perspectives are, however, criticised for their generalisations, a fact that I will discuss in the light of personalised empirical material.

Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (1978) is a cornerstone in this literature. He claims that the derogatory view of the Orient is part of a European self-image. There is an obvious interplay between the “invention” of the Orient and the desire to define Europe as superior. Of interest is also the fact that he uses mainly *belles-lettres* and books of travels to understand the image of the Orient, that is, material that concentrates on imaginative or figurative aspects of the other.

Said uses both Foucault’s theories on power and Gramsci’s theories on cultural hegemony, thus the general assumption about the “low other” is part of the cultural perception in West, as well as being inversely mirrored in the East. Much of Said’s thinking has been carried further in writings on the “invention of Africa” by Valentin Mudimbe (1988) and others. The constructed concept of Africa was, according to Mudimbe, what the Europeans needed in order to legitimate colonisation. He points at three key concepts of the colonising project – exploitation, curbing and modernisation. In his critique of colonial actions, he claims that underdevelopment and foreign aid became two sides of the same coin.

The leitmotif in postcolonial writings is a critique of the homogenising and stereotyping of collectives, leading to a view on persons from subaltern countries and continents as excluded from universal human rights. What is regarded as essential differences is grounded on perceptions of inherited mentalities, ethnicity and culture (and in the worst case “race”).² The opposite is suggested, namely looking at sameness in terms of fundamental human approaches to life values, or looking at differences, but in terms of access to power and resources.

Some of these thoughts are specifically relevant to this study. I will start with aspects that are not connected with art or music, in order to focus on musical aspects later.

² An example of how indigenous “Namibian cultural practices are conceptualised within ... [a] racial framework” is discussed in Minette Mans’s essay in this book.

One theme in postcolonial studies is multiculturalism. This deals with issues that arise when two or more cultures meet for a permanent coexistence. The multicultural meeting can either be a harsh conflict or without problems. Many scholars (e.g. Taylor 1992) argue that the wish is that the meeting results in a change in the partners involved – either as an emergence of a new culture (it may be of a hybrid nature) or with essential changes in the members involved in the meeting.

Another theme is the dichotomy between two principally different perceptions of Africa. On the one hand, Africa is seen as a Garden of Eden and, on the other hand, Africa is seen as a place of horror. These two perceptions often overlap in descriptions of encounters; they have formed a background to a false pre-understanding of the continent from early centuries to modern times (Mudimbe 1994; Ebron 2002).

A salient feature in the West's perception of Africa seems to be the notion of qualitative differences. It is easy to find lists of dichotomies that characterise the “low other” and Europe respectively in either colonial literature, assumptions, or every day discourses: wild – controlled, dark – light, nature – culture, underdeveloped – developed, etc. The notion of differences formed a basis for the colonial strategy and legitimised much unfair treatment of Africans that can be studied in two ways.

In the romanticised version of Africa “the” African culture was looked upon as different in an exoticised way, where its way of life and its culture should ideally remain untouched, as an eternal source for Western interests. Conversely, the perspective that regarded Africa as different and horrifying, legitimised intrusion and a basic change of all circumstances: besides fundamental livelihood, also art, religion and music. Both these views of Africa went hand in hand with an opinion that Africa was, and is, a continent lacking history and social changes. The search for stereotyped differences was underpinned by many anthropological studies (criticised in Nketia 1998). Part of this notion is set against the framework of the West in a constant state of change and with a living history, sometimes also regarding itself as lacking any form of ethnicity.

South Africa's relations to colonialism are distinctive as a result of the historical and political conditions of the country. The liberation from a European minority came later (1994) than in most other African countries (1950–1965). The almost 50-year-long apartheid regime gave colonialism a domestic face and presence. The relations between South Africa and Europe were both facilitated and hampered by that regime. The dominant European music was present, but also intensified the cultural oppression.

WHAT IS SO SPECIAL ABOUT ART AND MUSIC?

Aesthetic expressions and the production of culture have come to the fore in postcolonial discourse. The role of culture and cultural production in the narrow aesthetic sense is used for marking power, territory and social belonging (Ebron 2002). In opening up new roads of societal analysis scholars look more broadly at the consequences of art in terms of creating cultural identity (Frith 1996).

Knowledge (epistemology) and art are used as indicators of global power relations (Mudimbe 1988). Kofi Agawu gives a broad scrutiny and discussion on the topic, and finds that the Westernisation of African music has had drastic consequence on how both Africans and Westerners look down on African music (Agawu 2003 p. 1). His contribution explores the role of music in colonial and postcolonial global relations. Later in my analysis I will address the dichotomy: difference – sameness (Agawu 2003, p. 151) that runs through much of postcolonial discourse, a concept that captures the ambivalent attitude expressed in global cultures.

Paulla Ebron (2002) studied the Gambian Jali tradition. She found that Western demands on African culture (via exoticising and misunderstanding) produced both a disrespect of, and infatuation with, African art and a reciprocal readiness among Africans to “perform Africa” as a tourist paradise with a picturesque form of poverty.³ Also a vast literature on world music shows the unbalanced relationship between the metropole and the periphery (e.g. Erlman 1999).

Important aspects of the colonial gaze on the “low other” are primitivism and representation. Primitivism is a term in modern art which was coined in Paris in the 1930s, where the positive, negative and ambivalent sides of the concept of “negritude” were elaborated (Lundahl 2005). A consequence of the derogatory Western concept of “primitive art” is that art of “primitive” people can only represent the life of their own ethnic group, nation, or “race”. The North has only listened to the Africans when “they” talk (or make music) about matters within “their own” ethnic group. Thus “they” are limited and not allowed to express universal human issues (Spivak 1988). What then are the expectations of Western musicians concerning “African music”, and will the Africans perhaps try to live up to the desires of the metropolises (Ebron 2002)?

The underlying power relations that occur in musical “borrowings and appropriations” and how these in different ways “mark alterity” also affect the encounter (Born & Hesmondhalgh 2000, p. 2). Music is often connected with seemingly indisputable

³ Further discussion on how world music appropriates elements that designate cultural identity can be found in Minette Mans’s essay in this book.

standards.⁴ This has an effect on how “the other” is constructed in music. The general aspects of identity are formulated and articulated in music (*ibid.* p. 31); however, music in this regard seems to be very dynamic and ambivalent. Music mirrors the fact that a person has a dynamic and multidimensional identity.

Interestingly, Edward Said drops the clear-cut critique of Western Orientalism in his writings on music (1991). On the contrary, he looks at music both as “practised in a social and cultural setting” and more or less neutral as “an art whose existence is premised on individual performance, reception or production” (1991, pp. xviii, 35ff). His discussion with Daniel Barenboim (Barenboim & Said 2002) underpins this versatile perspective on music. Music seems to be an agent for specific political purposes, as well as being open to varying interpretations. An interest in these conflicting aspects of musical meetings led to my wish to understand how they were negotiated in musical praxis.

THREE MUSICIANS' EXPERIENCES OF GLOBALISATION

An array of questions was put to three Swedish musicians who had recent experiences of musical interactions with South Africa. The choice was strategic, as I wanted a diversity of opinions in order to find examples that could facilitate a general discussion, rather than generalised results. I regret lack of testimony from the South African side, and such data still remain to be collected for a future study.

The questions were divided into themes: the commission, the tangible cooperation, experiences of general and musical relations, image of the other, identity and role. The interviewees were a percussionist, a choir leader and a singer-songwriter. I will first outline the three interviews through quotations and comments, and then analyse and problematise the responses towards the end of the essay.

A PERCUSSIONIST

The Swedish percussionist started with an interest in West African music. She stayed in Ghana for some months in late 1980 in order to learn percussion. In mid-1990 she was part of a band that wished to play “African dance music” and especially *mbaqanga*. During a tour of a renowned South African vocalist in Sweden, the band befriended him and a year later some members of the band stayed at the singer’s place in South Africa (late 1994) and tried out possibilities for future musical cooperation. The interviewee

⁴ Classical European music is often regarded as neutral and without time-place-specific connotations or cultural import.

was one of the driving members in this process. After this start, the band and the South African singer undertook several tours in both Sweden and South Africa, and released some CDs together.

I did not have any commission or agenda – it was purely musical curiosity. We were after a specific style, but had an underlying compassion with Africa and South Africa. Yet we were never interested in doing a concert for any political reason.

The singer was on a high level compared with us. He had the power of a record company and manager. We were just on our own. The same happened in the music. It was his songs that we arranged for our band. He was never interested in our music. It was the same normal power relations as in any band with members from either one culture or many cultures. One person takes over. However, his life was not so organised and we had to beg for material that he forgot to send. In the worst moments, I tended to think that this was a typical African behaviour. But, from many experiences of international co-operation, I claim that it is absolutely a matter of personalities. Sometimes a society can be organised in different ways. But South Africa it is usually a very (Westerly) organised society (The percussionist).

The percussionist and her band sought differences. They wanted to explore a new kind of music. Even if *mbaqanga* was old fashioned music in South Africa, it represented fresh township music in Sweden. The SA audience was anyhow positive to the shows, as the cross-cultural group represented something new, and the SA audience was not as age-compartmentalised as in Sweden. Vice versa, the Swedish audience was not divided regarding age or other social difference when listening to African music.

We were very well received on stage in SA. There was a political aspect, but there were also musical and human ones. As a girl it meant a lot, performing on stage, music that seldom was touched by South African girls.

Unfortunately, African music is normally perceived among Swedes as almost solely bodily and filled with (superficial) happiness. What I feel in African music is something connected to the interrelated, complicated rhythm patterns that I find in jazz. So, in my own interest in African music I seek a development of these musical parameters. My 'most African' type of music is therefore not called 'African', but jazz or other genres without names, or possibly chamber music. I have also found a deep and specific relation between religion and music that intrigues me.

*To me, Africa is mostly a paradise and not a continent of horror. Anyhow I struggle to meet the bad sides of the society, like poverty. It is important, though, not to be too respectful to the myth of Africa as an innocent Garden of Eden. It is frequent among Swedes that they are fascinated by the personal confirmation or recognitions that they receive from Africans. This is valid both for general human relations and in love. Swedes can perhaps miss such recognition in Swedish culture. Thus the enchantment in *djembe* courses in Sweden is probably also connected to this*

phenomenon, looking for more authentic, personal, and human experiences that they find in the exotic version of the third World (The percussionist).

A CHOIR LEADER

The second interview was conducted with a choir leader working at a Swedish high school. The leader had cooperated with school choirs in Durban for some years and the choirs had performed together on several occasions. Besides their own repertoire, the South African choir learned some Swedish songs and the Swedish choirs learned some South African songs. The performances and the exchange of music made up their cooperation. The Swedish choir released a CD with Swedish, South African and songs in a mixed style that mirrored the project.

To a question on their experiences of being in a development aid commission, the choir leader protested: “We cannot help them”. He and the choir never thought of who was gaining what from the exchange. On the contrary, the Swedes were enriched, but never thought of what the Africans received. They felt that the togetherness was balanced and supported from both parties, without analysing the matter further.

It sounds pretentious, but I had since long wished to come to Southern Africa – somewhat like a calling. I had felt a challenge and a love for Africa. I enfolded the idea voluntary and was motivated by both political interest and by cultural infatuation. The choir’s embarking on this type of cooperation responded to a wish to explore other musical practices. And a South African choir gave possibilities of both safe travel arrangements and enough cultural difference, compared with other African countries (The choir leader).

The end of the quotation talks about the dilemma in seeking difference. Obviously there was a limit to what the choir could cope with regarding physical danger, but also regarding “cultural shock”.

Besides the forced wish to meet an “African choir”, the Swedish group seems to have worked in a balanced power relation. However, the financial realities made it easier for Swedes to travel to South Africa than vice versa. Thus, the Swedes had travelled to Africa as a whole group, whereas the southern choir only could send a few members. This was perceived as embarrassing, but unavoidable.

The Swedish choir leader wanted to challenge the choir by confronting them with a choir who had other musical and cultural qualities. This nurtured their curiosity and multicultural development. This cooperation made it possible to experience new sound ideals and specifically new attitudes in the performance. The Swedish choir met songs

with a simpler harmonic pattern, while they had to work hard on getting unknown rhythms correctly performed.

The South African choir admired the Swedish choir's resources – instruments and musical education. The conscious sound ideal and the knowledge of music theory were things they knew were valuable. But, this knowledge was not in place on a regular basis in the South African school system.

They emphasised a forceful expression, whereas we emphasised a choir sound which was in tune and uniform. They had no instruments, but we had access to percussion, piano, guitars, and other instrument.

The South African choir sang with an expression and bodily feeling originating both from the content of the song and from general enthusiasm and joy. We therefore sought cooperation with a black (Zulu) choir that was different from us and carried the genuine qualities we were after. This request met some resistance from our partners who arranged the stay. By this we became involved in a local power play between different "race groups" – an unexpected experience to us. But, we did not want to meet European or Latin American music, even if those styles were more popular among Durban teenagers at that time (The choir leader).

A SINGER-SONGWRITER

The third interview was conducted with a singer and song composer who had worked with various genres with focus on pop and gospel. He occasionally met a South African *mbaqanga* group and later looked them up for a continued musical collaboration. A project was set in motion, which resulted in a CD featuring the Swedish musician together with South African musicians, somewhat in the style of Paul Simon's Graceland.

The project was run and financed by me; I invested own money and was through the project the leading person. My purpose was to explore another but yet similar musical practice. Getting in contact with South Africa was also somewhat in line with my general affiliation with the anti-apartheid movement (The singer-songwriter).

Most of the collaboration (rehearsing and recording) took place in a Johannesburg studio. The legendary studio musicians were hired, but were also drawn into the creational process. The Swedish musician came with songs he had written in Sweden, showed outlined scores, and added illustration with his own voice. The musical material was processed further via suggestions from the South Africans on introductions, elaborations, and instrumentation. It also involved discussions on the sound, final shape,

and so on. A substantial Swedish work was the starting point, but the end result was blended with South African music.

The first thing that struck me was the urban South African music. I had heard of some ethnic music that I had never been touched by. But, the mbqanga took me back in a manner I had never experienced before. It was dance music that challenged the entire body. So, in a way it was both the similarities and the differences that intrigued me. I had earlier performed Nkosi Sikelel' iAfrika with my Swedish band and my own interpretation of the text. Even if it is not a typical African song it moved me. The first time I heard it, it was really hefty when they all sang vigorously with their black voices.

A general feeling of Christianity tied us together. I mean that I would never have been able to engage in a Moslem, Hindu, or Buddhist group. In a sense, blues, the Afro-American roots of pop music, gospel, and rock'n'roll made up a common environment. The cultural distances are not too far-flung. Music is obviously a free zone where political negotiations are left outside the door of the concert hall or the studio.

Difference in terms of the leader's authority was under debate through the project. I took for granted that all persons should be remunerated evenly, but that caused a major conflict. The South Africans also expected me to act more forcefully as a leader.

I have now become a missionary in Sweden promoting the power of Africa that overwhelmed me. I had not expected to meet the urban and modern Africa. You should not feel pity for Africans (The singer-songwriter).

A CONCLUDING ANALYSIS: THE DUAL PERSPECTIVE

The three musicians' stories prompt a discussion on the questions raised in my introduction. In the first place they illustrated the encounter as placed in a dual perspective. The persons involved felt intuitively that they were drawn into an overarching geopolitical power game. The Swedes were received in South Africa in a manner different from other Europeans, and notably different from European settlers. Even if their projects not were related to any kind of aid project, they were in a way part of that history. It facilitated their contacts. It was also easier to get Swedish funding for a tour to Africa than to Western countries.

On the other hand, they all had personal agendas for their work. The ethos of the growing relation was relatively freed from specific attitudes. The emerging conflicts in the daily work were unexpected and not stereotypical. With the focus on the music, both partners found recognition and respect. The partners experienced that their work was mutually beneficial. In the interviews I can read that they did not bother about who was

gaining or not. However, in the case of the choir leader and the singer, the Swedish partner obviously took a leading role.

Ambivalence runs through the material. The percussionist regrets in hindsight her accusation that someone was a “typical African”. She would never let that kind of judgment pass her lips or guide her actions under normal circumstances. Likewise the innocent choir leader was taken aback by the complicated and unexpected “race” pattern in South Africa.

The musician’s description of power relations best mirrors the consequences of their ambivalent behaviour. The South African musicians were comfortable with being studio musicians – even if several of them were usually leading names on the *mbaqanga* stage. The Durban choirs were also content with the cooperation. Maybe this says something about the conditions and access to resources for a musician in South Africa compared with Sweden. The percussionist faced the opposite situation regarding power relations. Altogether, the personal level of the narratives of the musicians avoids stereotypes or generalised thoughts about the “other.”

The three Swedish musicians had in common an upbringing imprinted by left-wing international solidarity as practised in Swedish NGOs. They engaged in personally constructed projects focusing on musical development – in the case of the choir leader a sound that expressed social consciousness and forceful attitudes; in the case of the percussionist a more intrinsic musical development; and in the case of the singer recreating his first experience of *mbaqanga*.

Music as such apparently creates diverse conditions for the international or intercultural meeting. They all referred to the sense of togetherness in the work and that acting through music together blocked prejudices and stereotypes. At the core of their task was expressing a musical phrase and not making political statements. The choir leader talked about the multicultural blessings when he saw how his learners expressed fascination instead of hesitation. He tried to explain it in terms of a perceptual totality of music that interacts with a person’s identity. The percussionist found other musical connotations in the concept of “African music” that were salient in jazz or other genres and not in the music labelled “indigenous” by anthropologists. The singer/songwriter wanted to embrace another music by mixing music from Africa and the West (*mbaqanga* and gospel/pop) with added ingredients of Christianity.

SAMENESS - DIFFERENCE

The dual perspective intersects with a discussion on difference and sameness. The musicians moved beyond a level of understanding based on general statements to a level

where musical practices were not perceived as stereotypes. Holland *et al.* (1998) note the dual perspective and add that a person can blend or juxtapose two perspectives. I see the same pattern in the behaviour and conceptions of the musicians. The notion of difference becomes legitimised by the music, which seeks development in contact with new music. Thus music seems to be indifferent to the dichotomy of sameness-difference. Obviously a musician needs to be challenged by differing musical practices, but this is not parallel with the notion of seeking differences in a postcolonial discourse.

The percussionist was in search of difference and jumped into a rather unknown genre, yet in the long run she gained other aspects of the new music that did not specifically fall in line with the geopolitical concept: “African”. The choir leader looked for an alternative via stereotyped perceptions of what was African, but combined this with a political striving towards solidarity as a “lesson” for his choir. The singer was struck by sameness, but also by the fact that working with South African music was also positively viewed in the environment where he usually worked. We find here that clear-cut rationales for the cooperation are not obvious. Rather, I can see that clustered on top of each other are rationales which emanate both from the common colonial view on Africa, and from what appear to be reasonable personal incentives. What is revealed is both a co-existence of non-conflicting multiple perspectives, but also the tension between general aspects and personal experiences.

The Swedish ambiguous view on South Africa might be a consequence of the inability to handle the historical situation we inherited as part of the colonial project. We question ourselves: how does it come about that Africans are still oppressed in the global power game – regardless of Swedish financial support, positive attitudes and actions? Is it still possible that a master-slave relation colours the Swedish perception of the relationship? The musical projects do not offer resistance, as both partners are historically used to a code of conduct in the mission field or in the colonial expropriation – now transferred to harvesting cultural values. The interviewed Swedes perhaps found themselves caught between feelings of equality and paternalism.

A theme that relates to the postcolonial critique are the concepts of “race” and “exotic”. I do find thoughts in the material based on difference perceived in terms of race: black is an aspect of the genuine, and the expression “I feel like I had a call and a love” might be a modern extension of “the white man’s burden”. Even if the interviewees rejected the idea of Africa as a place of horror, I could find evidence of perceived limits as to how far they could move geographically, politically or culturally into Africa without becoming too uncomfortable.

Even more interesting is the positive feeling that Africa or South Africa exerted on the Swedes. It is a fact that the music lies closer to the European style than that of other continents (Agawu 2003, p. 8). The statements of the singer and the choir leader support such a possibility. We could also talk about an Atlantic conglomerate of musics that originated from European Church music and then revolves around Afro-American popular music and the modern African scene. Remote from this conglomerate are more traditional music practices from Africa that attracted only the percussionist.

The interpretation of the material gave an insight into intercultural (intercontinental) encounters in music. This has evidently displayed a complex web of interactions between various levels of thinking. It is impossible to turn away from positions found in postcolonial perspectives on the global encounter. At the same time there is a need for an interrogation of the psychosocial or even psychological aspects of persons acting in an intercultural meeting.

I asked questions on the possible interest from the African partners in terms of Swedish music, an aspect that would have signified equal multiculturalism. In fact there was no desire from the African side to explore music from Sweden. The choirs that met exchanged songs, but more as a political act. However, the Africans were interested in learning about sight-reading, equalised voices and other features of the European classical tradition performed by the Swedish choir. The unexpectedly low level of interest in exploring the Swedish culture and song tradition might have been a clue that points towards an encounter stamped by imbalance, evidence that gives food for thought beyond this essay.

REFERENCES

- Agawu, K. 2003. *Representing African music: Postcolonial notes, queries, positions*. New York & London: Routledge.
- Barenboim, D. & Said, E. W. 2002. *Parallels and paradoxes: Explorations in music and society*. New York: Pantheon Books.
- Berg, L. 1997. *När Sverige upptäckte Afrika [When Sweden discovered Africa]*. Stockholm: Rabén Prisma.
- Born, G. & Hesmondhalgh, D. 2000. *Western music and its others: Difference, representation, and appropriation in music*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press.
- Ebron, P. A. 2002. *Performing Africa*. Princeton: University Press.
- Erlmann, V. 1999. *Music, modernity and the global imagination: South Africa and the West*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Frith, S. 1996. Music and identity. In S. Hall & P. d. Gay (eds), *Questions of cultural identity*. London: Sage, pp. 108–127.

- Holland, D., Lachicotte, J. W., Skinner, D. & Cain, C. 1998. *Identity and agency in cultural worlds*. Cambridge, London: Harvard University Press.
- Lundahl, M. 2005. *Vad är en neger? Negritude, essentialism, strategi*. [What is a Negro? Négritude, essentialism, strategy]. Göteborg: Glänta.
- Mudimbe, V. Y. 1988. *The invention of Africa: Gnosis, philosophy, and the order of knowledge*. Bloomington & Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Mudimbe, V. Y. 1994. *The idea of Africa*. Bloomington, Indianapolis: Indiana University Press.
- Nketia, J. H. K. 1998. The scholarly study of African music: A historical review. In R. M. Stone (ed.), *The Garland encyclopedia of world music. Volume 1: Africa*. New York and London: Garland, pp. 13–73.
- Said, E. W. 1978. *Orientalism*. New York: Pantheon.
- Said, E. W. 1991. *Musical elaborations*. New York: Columbia University press.
- Sellström, T. 2002. *Sweden and national liberation in South Africa. Vol. 2, Solidarity and assistance 1970–1994*. Uppsala: Nordic Africa Institute.
- Spivak, G. C. 1988. Can the subaltern speak? In C. Nelson & L. Grossberg (eds.), *Marxism and the interpretation of culture*. Houndmills: University of Illinois Press, pp. 271–313.
- Taylor, C. 1992. *Multiculturalism and “the politics of recognition”*. New Jersey: Princeton.
- Thorsén, S.-M. 2002. The second liberation struggle. Cultural identities in South African music education. *Svensk Tidskrift för musikforskning [Swedish Journal for Musicology]*, Vol. 84, 50–64.
- Thorsén, S.-M. 2004. Swedish mission and music education in Southern Africa. In S.-M. Thorsén (ed.), *Sounds of change – social and political features of music in Africa. Sida Studies No. 12*. Stockholm: Sida, pp. 180–198.
- Thorsén, S.-M. 2005. Three Swedish missionaries: Images of music in Southern Africa. *STM-Online Vol. 8 (2005)*, http://www.musik.uu.se/ssm/stmonline/vol_8/index.html. [Date of access: 1 May 2006]
- Young, R. 2001. *Postcolonialism. An historical introduction*. Oxford: Blackwell.

STORYTELLING AS MEDIATOR BETWEEN WORLDS

*Sandie Malan, Bridge House School and
Stellenbosch University, South Africa*

ABSTRACT

Since 1994, with the change of government in South Africa and the inception of the new education system, educators have struggled to implement the new Arts and Culture curriculum, resulting in feelings of disempowerment. The aim of this essay is to research ways of empowering educators to teach Arts and Culture or similar music/arts programmes by drawing on the wealth of resources in terms of philosophy, processes and methods readily available in South Africa. Storytelling, as an educational tool, is examined for its potential to empower educators. *Iintsomi*, the musical storytelling practice of the *amaXhosa* of South Africa, is investigated as an example of integrated arts in action and for its relevance to intercultural music/arts education. Findings are based on the results of a series of *iintsomi* workshops presented for Arts and Culture educators at the University of Stellenbosch Music Department. Conclusions are drawn and recommendations made regarding implementation.

INTRODUCTION

The time is ripe for South Africa to wake from its slumber and to reclaim its rightful place as a country of music-makers who also dance, tell stories and create works of art. It is also time to realise that our future is inextricably linked to the rest of Africa. The challenge for music educators is to explore and utilise the music-making practices in South Africa and the ideas behind these practices. By doing so, we may respond to the greatest challenge of all, which, in the words of John Blacking (1976 p.101), is to promote soundly organised humanity by enhancing human consciousness (Oehrle 1998, p. 153).

In this essay, storytelling is investigated for its potential to empower educators to teach Arts and Culture. It is recommended that educators tap into the existing diverse wealth of resources in terms of philosophy, modes and methods that are readily available and accessible in South Africa (Oehrle 1987, Introduction). *Iintsomi*, the musical storytelling practice of the *amaXhosa* of South Africa, is explored as a local example of integrated arts in action, and for its relevance to intercultural music/arts education. In addition,

storytelling in general and *iintsomi* are examined as valuable tools for strengthening identity. Recognition is regarded as fundamental to identity formation. This essay is positioned between apparently opposite worlds, namely local and global, indigenous and modernised, fixed and hybrid. Storytelling and *iintsomi* are explored as mediators between these diverse worlds. A theoretical framework provides perspectives on storytelling from a sociological viewpoint. Conclusions are drawn based on findings resulting from workshops conducted at the University of Stellenbosch during 2004 and 2005. Although this essay focuses on *iintsomi*, references are made to other storytelling practices in South Africa and further afield. As such, it is not limited to South African arts education and could be adapted for any setting.

The point of departure, therefore, is to research and explore storytelling as a means of empowering educators to teach Arts and Culture. Two main research questions are investigated. How can educators be empowered to teach Arts and Culture? Can indigenous oral narratives such as *iintsomi* be adapted for use in contemporary music/arts programmes in schools?

BACKGROUND

During the past decade major changes have taken place in South African government, society and, consequently, in the education system. The change in government initiated the biggest change in education in South Africa's history, according to Thorsén (1997, p. 110) and brought about a drastic overhaul of the education system. However, since the inception of the new system of education in South Africa, namely outcomes-based education (OBE), Curriculum 2005 (C2005) and the National Curriculum Statement (NCS), educators across the board have struggled to implement the new curriculum, largely due to feelings of disempowerment. In most South African schools the four arts disciplines, namely music, dance, drama and the visual arts, are taught as one subject, Arts and Culture. "Many generalist and specialist educators now have to teach the new Learning Area, Arts and Culture, for which they have neither the training nor the experience" (Akrofi 2001, p. 13).

Furthermore, the curriculum is more inclusive of the cultural diversity of South African society, which educators are also not equipped to teach. Many music/arts educators have an exclusively Western training (Joseph 1999, p. 126). The irony is that, however bad the previous curriculum may have been, coping with the new diversity poses another problem for educators, according to Van Niekerk (1997, p. 267). Diversity in music education and the arts not only refers to population diversity, but also to diversity in the music/arts practices demanding to be taught. Van Niekerk (1997, p. 267) states

that many educators do not have the skills to teach one music practice, let alone a diversity of music practices. The challenge, therefore, is to match the diversity represented in South African society and schools with a diversity of music/arts practices.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

I have selected a theoretical framework which views the discussion on storytelling as a means of empowering educators from a sociological perspective.

RECOGNITION

At the core of my research is the belief that every person deserves to be recognised and respected for who they are. Taylor (1994, p. 24) stresses the need “and even the demand” for recognition by individuals, groups and communities. Recognition, in this sense, is that of identity. Identities, in Taylor’s view, are shaped by recognition or its absence. Failure to recognise or misrecognition can seriously damage a person’s sense of self-worth (*ibid.* p. 26). Recognition is therefore more than a courtesy owed to people. It is a “vital human need” (*ibid.* p. 25). Translated into an educational environment, this includes recognition and affirmation of cultural expressions such as the music and stories that have shaped and formed the identities of individuals and groups.

UNITY AND DIVERSITY

On the topic of the apparently contradictory issues of nation building, on the one hand, and sustaining ethnic identities, on the other, Thorsén (1997, pp. 12, 13) gives insight into the dilemma regarding unity and diversity and the role of music education. Any music/arts programme for use in South African schools needs to take into account the rich diversity of people who make up the so-called “Rainbow Nation”, yet simultaneously reflect on those aspects of Arts and Culture which contribute towards South Africanness or a South African identity. Bearing these thoughts in mind, I have tried to include those aspects of cultural expression that celebrate the diversity represented in society, as well as emphasise those aspects encouraging unity and togetherness in my teaching and in the workshops.

INTERCULTURAL MUSIC/ARTS EDUCATION

I envisage intercultural music/arts education as learners interacting or engaging with one another and experiencing a diversity of cultural expressions through storytelling, music and the other arts. However, the aim of multicultural education is not only to

create awareness of others, but to transform society (Cai in Fox 2003, p. 7). How will these intercultural experiences ultimately impact on their lives?

In agreement with Oehrle (1998, p. 151), I prefer to use the term “intercultural”, which I find more appropriate for the South African context than the term “multicultural”. “Multicultural” used in a South African context has a very different meaning to when it is used in the context of protection and representation of minority groups in, for example, the United States of America (Volk 1998, p. 3) or in the Nordic countries.¹ The term “culture”, for many South Africans living during the apartheid era, meant “race” and “multicultural” meant many cultures or races living alongside each other, yet separated.²

My understanding of culture is that it is constantly in a state of transition as individuals and groups adopt aspects of cultural expression that give them a sense of identity and belonging. Thorsén (2002, p. 18) reveals the multidimensional nature of cultural identity, which he describes as a mosaic. He asserts that people are always constructing their identities according to their heritage and hopes for the future. Van der Merwe (2004, p. 155) points out that in a globalised world everyone experiences fusion and assimilation, which he calls a “dynamic process of transcultural osmosis between groups and within individuals”. He understands cultural diversity in terms of “cultural differences within cultures” and “cross-cutting over culture” rather than distinctive cultures as such. Culture is therefore not understood as something static, but rather as fluid and flexible. Given the opportunity to engage with other expressions of culture through storytelling, learners are able to try out, adopt or reject aspects of a role that could contribute to their identity formation.

A PRAXIAL PHILOSOPHY

Prior to 1994 and the advent of a new political dispensation in South Africa, music and arts education were based entirely on Eurocentric philosophy and practice. Subsequently, there has been a major shift towards a more culturally diverse curriculum

¹ See, for example, Fock’s discussion (in this volume).

² For example, under the apartheid government there were nineteen different departments of education! Moore (1994, p. 239) notes that, while for some people multicultural education is seen as the antithesis of apartheid, for others it is too close for comfort because it has cultural difference as its grounding principle and practice. Cross, in an interview with Moore (Moore 1994, p. 240), points out that apartheid needs to be understood as meaning a particular model of multicultural education in that ethnic difference became a fundamental principle of organisation and governance.

that reflects the indigenous knowledge, philosophies and cultural expressions of all the peoples of South Africa. What is clearly needed is a way of empowering Arts and Culture educators to implement the new curriculum. Without a clear sense of direction grounded in a common philosophy for music/arts education and guided by fundamental, agreed principles, educators will continue to flounder in their attempts to implement the new Arts and Culture curriculum (Malan 2004, p. 28). Oehrle (1998, p. 46) emphasises this standpoint when she asserts that “(i)t is essential to develop a philosophy from and relevant to South Africa before developing methodology and curriculum”. Once a philosophical framework is in place, educators can begin to work out a curriculum which is sustained and borne by that philosophy.

In agreement with Oehrle (1998) and echoing Elliott (1996), I propose a praxial philosophy and process for music education and the arts as a way forward. Elliott (1996, p. 3) bases his praxial³ philosophy on the understanding that music is a human practice. He describes humanity as diverse and therefore (M)usic, meaning music in the broad sense, is also understood as culturally diverse. Elliott’s praxial philosophy of music translates into a teaching environment that involves inducting learners into the context of a diversity of musical practices in practical ways. The meanings and values of a culture are evinced in the actual music-making and music-listening.

Nzewi (2001, p. 20) maintains that the notion of “praxial” is not a North American invention but an original African concept, adapted by Western academics and now being reintroduced to Africa! He stresses that African indigenous music has always been practice-based, contextualised and practical with the fundamental understanding that “knowing is doing” (Nzewi 2001, p. 20). In agreement with Oehrle (2001, p. 113), I therefore began to look at indigenous knowledge systems as a resource worth considering as a basis for the formation of a philosophy of music/arts education in Africa.⁴

INTEGRATION OF THE ARTS

I have found that integration of the arts as a mode of teaching is one of the most effective ways of giving expression to cultural diversity because of its intercultural

³ Elliott (1996, p. 3) describes the term “praxial” as meaning: “critically reflective action in a context. Musical action and musical context combine to produce musical understanding.”

⁴ Questions regarding authenticity may be raised and are beyond the scope of this essay. However, Volk (1998, p. 18), Kwami (1998, p. 167) and Akrofi (2001, p. 12) all recommend that educators invite culture bearers or artists-in-residence into their classrooms to provide first-hand experiences.

approach and emphasis on multiconnections (Malan 2004, p. 205). Bloomfield (2000, p. 1) describes the primary aim of integration of the arts with each other and with the general curriculum as a way of enriching and strengthening the learning process. While this may not be the first choice of music teachers, Russell-Bowie (1998, p. 2) points out that it may be the only way some schools will be able to experience music education in Australia (and in most South African state schools). The National Curriculum Statement of South Africa recommends that the arts should be taught in an integrated way, but still allow for integrity of the different components. Stephens (1997, p. 62) calls for a balance between integration and specialisation.⁵

STORYTELLING

Stories worldwide, in the form of folk or fairy tales that have been passed down through the ages, have always had an instructive, guiding role in the lives of children. Pinkola Estes (1992, p. 16) maintains that “stories are embedded with instructions which guide us about the complexities of life”. In this sense, Bettelheim (1976, p. 3) points out that fairy tales assist children to find meaning in their lives and help them to deal with real life situations, for example, the death of a parent (Bettelheim 1976, p. 6).

Storytelling, as opposed to the reading of stories, has a history of oral tradition. Modern storytellers are the descendants of a long line of “holy people, troubadours, bards, griots, cantadoras, cantors, traveling poets, bums, hags and crazy people” (Pinkola Estes 1992, p. 15). As a result, the stories have been subjected to human alteration. Bettelheim (1976, p. 150) explains how stories have been “shaped and reshaped” to suit different audiences.

Storytelling transcends boundaries of time and space (Wajnryb 2003, p. 1). In an interview with Salie (2005, p. 19), Gcina Mhlophe, the renowned South African storyteller, points out that the ability to take audiences on an imaginary journey to see things that they have never seen before and convince them that they are real remains a highlight for her. Omotoso, Nigerian master storyteller, elaborates that in his culture nothing is what it seems (Salie 2005, p. 19), hence the magic of storytelling. Espi-Sanchis, known throughout South Africa as “the music man”, stresses the entertainment aspect of storytelling while at the same time learning about a vast range of topics (Smuts 1999,

⁵ While integration encourages perception of relationships or connections and enables learners to adapt to different contexts, Stephens cautions that integration without specialisation in one or more of the arts could result in learners having difficulty in understanding cross-curricular needs in real life. The role of the teacher in his view is crucial to creating an environment of support and encouragement for the learners, thus providing a stimulating context for discovery and learning (Stephens 1997, pp. 63–64).

p. 35). He uses storytelling to introduce African music to his young audiences, utilising available materials to create instruments to produce interlocking rhythms and sound pictures.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

I have used a conceptual framework suggested by Wajnryb (2003, p. 8) to position and explain the role of storytelling in music/arts education. The key terms “experience”, “story” and “narrative” are used as follows: “experience” is the actual event as it occurs, “story” is an individual’s reflection on the experience, and “narrative” is the story as it is narrated or presented, usually to an audience. Narratives “told and retold” (Wajnryb 2003, p. 11) over time become collective memory, stored as oral narratives or written texts. This essay focuses on storytelling as oral narratives rather than narrative texts.

Collectives of people, according to Wajnryb (2003, p. 11), become “storied” over time. Their stories become entwined with their collective identity, which also undergoes construction through the narratives. A social perspective on collective memory views this entwining or interconnecting with each other as “breaking down the barriers between people” and allowing people to engage with each other’s lives (Wajnryb 2003, p. 13). In a school environment this dynamic concept is illustrated as the learners’ own stories are blended together with their collective stories, which over time can transform a diverse group of learners into a learning community.⁶ The stories of individuals thus connect the person with the group to form an interpersonal connection.

There is also an intrapersonal connection as the self that a person brings to the classroom connects with the self they left at home (Wajnryb 2003, p. 159). All these narratives provide a rich store of interpersonal experiences to use as resources for an intercultural music/arts curriculum. A wide range of materials, including collections of fantasy, folk tales, myths, legends, animal fables and real-life experiences, is also available in libraries. Large banks of oral narratives abound in indigenous communities and folk narratives worldwide.

The findings of a research project conducted amongst Navarren (Spanish) schoolchildren (ages 6–12) indicate that learners live in two separate worlds in terms of music education. Firstly, there is the music taught in schools, in which they have no

⁶ Wajnryb (2003, p. 14) uses the metaphor of a patchwork quilt to describe this process of many smaller units being worked together to form a larger unit. The stitching that binds the smaller squares together to create the whole are the many shared experiences a class may have together.

interest. Secondly, there is the music outside the school with which the majority of learners identify (Ibarretxe 2005, p. 123). Music more in keeping with their lifestyles led to “a greater identification, a higher motivation and a more active participation” (p. 126). There is a need to “bridge the gaps between these two worlds” (p. 123). Arts and Culture educators could learn from this project by incorporating the issues and influences impacting on the lives of learners, for example, their music, popular idols and dance styles, into collective storytelling and other components of their teaching.

STORYTELLING AS PEDAGOGICAL METHOD

Storytelling as a method of teaching Arts and Culture is based on the fact that stories, by nature, are didactic and instructive. Stories in education are primarily used to teach values, morals and language (Wajnryb 2003, p. 3). Music and the arts are powerful tools of enculturation. Stories and songs should therefore be sourced, firstly, from the learners’ own cultural environment to strengthen and develop personal identity and, secondly, from the local region or further afield (Flolu 1996, p. 169).

Storytelling contributes towards emotional, intellectual and social development of learners. By creating opportunities for learners to engage in storytelling, educators open the way for learners to engage on different levels with the material presented and with each other. Learners are affirmed emotionally regarding who they are as individuals as they reflect on their own identity.⁷ Storytelling creates social awareness as learners are enlightened about the values and viewpoints of others, and also as opportunities are provided for interaction. Intellectual scope is developed through discussion about genres of stories, for example, myth, fable, folk tale, to further extend learners’ knowledge and understanding of global values, morals and uses of language.

Storytelling provides opportunities for intercultural experience and expression. Emphasis is on building bridges between diverse worlds, thus focusing on commonalities between people. Difference is expressed through individuals’ own stories contributing towards the whole and through the comparison of different genres of stories and storytelling. Storytelling has a central role to play in intercultural music/arts programmes in that it gives a voice to individuals, creates awareness of others and motivates for changed attitudes in individuals and groups. It recognises differences but focuses on unifying aspects to create a whole.

⁷ Dudley-Marling in Fox (2003, p. 21) refers to the educator’s role as creating spaces for learners to represent themselves and find themselves represented in books (and stories).

Storytelling is a doorway to integrated arts education. Stories provide an excellent starting point in integrated arts programmes in that they progress naturally to accompanying expressions of music, drama, dance/movement and the visual arts as enhancement of the storytelling. Further links are possible with other learning areas or their components through engaging with common themes and exploring the multiconnections, thereby extending and enriching teaching/learning environments. This is in line with curriculum requirements for Arts and Culture in the National Curriculum Statement.

Learners engage with the Learning Outcomes of the Arts and Culture curriculum, namely: create, reflect, collaborate and communicate. Learners create stories collectively, drawn from their own experiences, existing oral narratives or narrative texts. They reflect through discussion on varying topics or themes, values, beliefs and cultural expressions. As they engage with each other in the telling of the story, whether as narrators, actors, musicians or audience, learners collaborate to bring stories to life as collective narratives. During the planning, interactive process and presentation/performance of the stories, learners communicate with each other and the audience.

Storytelling from a classroom organisational point of view focuses on group work, role playing and skills development. Narrators, actors, dancers, musicians and audience all contribute towards the creation of stories. Roles are interchanged, giving opportunity to all for skills development in different aspects of the performance. Skills include: projection and variation of the voice for narration, the use of the body in space, musical skills and versatility, listening skills, timing, use of imagination and creative skills for the making of masks, costumes and props.

Storytelling can be considered as a tool for educators to teach music/arts and language programmes. As such, it is a means to intercultural, integrated teaching and communication. Furthermore, it is a means to classroom organisation, planning of lessons and assessment of learners. Storytelling therefore empowers educators to teach Arts and Culture.

***IINTSOMI* : THE INDIGENOUS MUSICAL STORIES OF THE AMAXHOSA OF SOUTH AFRICA**

Whereas eleven different language groups are recognised in South Africa, I have chosen to focus on one of the groups for the purposes of this essay for the following reasons: I live in the Western Cape Province, where 55.3% of the population speak Afrikaans at home, 23% speak *isiXhosa* and 19% speak English (Wikipedia, 11 September 2005). I was introduced first-hand to the practice of *iintsomi* by my colleague, Bangikhaya Poni,

himself a mother-tongue isiXhosa speaker. While the focus is on *iintsomi*, references are made to other similar storytelling practices in South Africa and further afield.

Iintsomi (singular: *intsomi*; plural: *iintsomi*) are the musical stories of amaXhosa⁸ of South Africa.⁹ In an interview with Bangkhaya Poni, colleague and drama teacher at my school, the educational value of *iintsomi* was explained: “*iintsomi* have always been used to entertain, excite, teach and explain ... to make sense of the world and to help us understand each other.” Bangikhaya grew up within isiXhosa culture and participated in *iintsomi* which were regularly performed by his storytelling grandmother and family members in the Eastern Cape town of Stutterheim.

Iintsomi fulfil both an organising role in Xhosa society – bringing order to the daily lives and events of people (Scheub 1975, p. 3) – and an educational role, in that important social norms, values and communal knowledge can be passed down from one generation to the next. *Iintsomi* thus turn ordinary events into extraordinary experiences as participants are enabled to reflect and look inward, thereby connecting spiritually to what Herbst and Ng’andu (2004, p. 52) refer to as an “intuitive” world. It is here that they receive guidance for the ways in which they conduct their everyday lives. Jordan (2004, p. 15) sums up the role of *iintsomi* when he explains how societies were able to “maintain a dialogue with the past while retaining a correct pulse on the present and a perspective of the future through speculative thought and imagery embodied in tales”.

SETTING

In their original form, *iintsomi* were usually related at home after a day’s work when the family gathered in a relaxed manner around an outside fire. In this setting an elderly woman would begin the *iintsomi* with the opening isiXhosa phrase “*kwathi ke kaloku ngantsomi*” (roughly: “once upon a time”) (Scheub 1975, p. 9) and end with the phrase “*phela phela ngantsomi*” (roughly: “and that is the end of the story”) (Scheub 1975, p. 13). The audience, made up of other family members of all ages, was fully engaged in the experience with storyteller and audience creating the stories together.

A taboo existed stating that *iintsomi* could only be performed at night, mainly to discourage children from relaxing during the day and neglecting their daily chores (Nompula 1988, p. 31). Those not adhering to this restriction might well have grown horns, or so it was believed! If for some reason, *iintsomi* were related at a different time

⁸ *amaXhosa* are the people who speak the language; *umXhosa* is a person who speaks the language.

⁹ Scheub (1975, p. 3) refers to *iintsomi* as *ntsomi*, describing it as a Xhosa performing art.

of day, a piece of wood was tucked into the hair just above the forehead to prevent this catastrophe (Jordan 2004, p. 15).

FORM AND CONTENT

According to Jordan (2004, p. 14), there are three forms of storytelling in Xhosa society: *iintsomi* are fictitious, fantastic and mythological tales; *amabali* are legendary tales and *imilando* are tales of historical content. Men tend to be the composers of heroic poems and the tellers of historical stories, whereas the older women tend to tell stories dealing with the human issues and ideals of truth, virtue and beauty. Herd-boys and men who work with animals most often tell animal stories. Like Aesop's Fables, African animal stories are commentaries on the plight of humankind, "projecting human faculties and frailties" onto animals (Jordan 2004, p. 16).

STRUCTURE

At the centre of *iintsomi* are several repeated phrases or core clichés. Sung or chanted, these are known and remembered by the storyteller and audience alike. A complete performance can be formed around them (Scheub in Jordan 2004, p. 21). The storyteller remembers only a key set of clichés and is free to add his/her own special touches. Likewise, the audience may also participate in the story making by contributing additional clichés, which a skilful storyteller will absorb and include in the story line. There is always room for improvisation and change, allowing for easy adaptation to suit any audience. Meaning in the form of social values is implicit in the core-clichés and is communicated primarily through the storyteller.

The basic structural element of *iintsomi* is repetition. Constant movement between tension and resolution occurs through the repetition of core-clichés, which can be repeated many times and in any number of combinations. The plot is therefore developed through the use of repetition and an expansible image, and moves from conflict to climax (Scheub in Jordan 2004, p. 28).

MUSICAL CONTENT

The storytelling is often accompanied by music and singing which plays an integral part of the story. Audience participation in the song parts of the story (Nompula 1988, p. 31) together with vocalisations, mime, gesture and dancing, create a closely interwoven blend with the spoken word (Scheub 1975, p. 15). *Iintsomi* provide opportunities for the development of basic music-making skills during performances, for example: group singing, singing on pitch, singing in two parts, expression through movement, clapping

and drumming skills, within a set rhythm, as well as improvisation within a set rhythm and during singing or dance (Nompula 2002, pp. 4–8).

In a performance the storyteller uses body movements and vocal effects to bring the character(s) to life. The audience often echoes these in agreement or empathy. There is therefore no need for a description of the characters as this is conveyed by the storyteller's presence (Scheub in Jordan 2004, p. 29).

ORAL NARRATIVES

Oral narratives, unlike written text, exist for the moment only. Each performance is unique and can never be performed in exactly the same way again. For this reason, an oral narrative, when it is transferred into a written form, can never quite capture the whole dynamic of a live performance (Jordan 2004, p. 13). *Iintsomi* are oral narratives and can therefore never be relegated to the genre of short stories (Scheub in Jordan 2004, p. 30). They must stand as an artistic medium in their own right. A distinctive feature of oral narratives in Africa is the presence of an interactive audience, which distinguishes oral literature from written literature (Fretz 2004, p. 82).

IINTSOMI ADAPTED FOR MUSIC/ARTS EDUCATION

Recent research points to the relevance of indigenous knowledge systems for music education in general and African music/arts education in particular. Oehrle (2001, p. 106) notes that Western academics have been turning to Africa more recently for solutions involving music education. Herbst and Ng'andu (2004, p. 52), in describing *inshimi*, the storytelling practice of the Bemba people in Zambia (the equivalent of *iintsomi*), refer to it as the “bridge” which connects the “intuitive and logico-mathematical systems” of indigenous knowledge systems and global knowledge systems. *Iintsomi* as an oral practice and an educational tool falls precisely into the gap between the two worlds of indigenous knowledge systems and global systems. As such, they have the important role of preserving valuable cultural heritage, as well as embodying relevant educational principles for contemporary music/arts curricula.

Kruger (1996, p. 2) asserts that the musical stories (of the Venda people of South Africa) are ideally suited for use in primary schools in that they are didactic and instructive. Herbst and Ng'andu (2004, p. 53) point out that the use of *inshimi*, based on conceptual and pedagogical principles, would broaden possibilities in musical arts education. Embedded in the *iintsomi* are certain educational principles which are relevant to music/arts education programmes. These include a practical approach, the praxial

philosophy, self and others, an integrated approach, multisensory learning, cognitive thinking, group energy, the *ubuntu* principle and creativity.¹⁰

Mans (1997, p. 83) states that it is the nature of music/arts in Africa to be linked together. Rituals reflect the totality of the arts in the form of “music, dance, masks, painted bodies, drama, mythology, physical prowess, education and social mores” (Mans 1997, pp. 84, 85). Kwami (1998, p. 168) also uses the term “multi-arts” for the teaching of African music. He recommended using African storytelling as the focus, with dance, drama and music making taking major roles. This is exactly how *iintsomi* function in practice and how they can be used in contemporary classrooms.

In the case of culturally diverse classes, where a diversity of musical cultures may be represented, *iintsomi* hold the potential for developing cultural awareness amongst learners and respect for other expressions of culture.

Iintsomi have the dual role of preserving valuable indigenous knowledge and embodying sound educational principles. As such, they are a valuable means of accessing existing and available resources for use in contemporary classrooms by Arts and Culture educators.

IINTSOMI WORKSHOPS

A series of *iintsomi* workshops were conducted for Arts and Culture educators as part of a larger in-service course presented by the University of Stellenbosch Music Department. The aim of the workshops was to empower generalist educators from local schools to teach Arts and Culture. The greater project involved action research whereby educators were engaged in applying course material in their own classrooms and providing feedback in questionnaires.

The *iintsomi* workshops were based on a praxial philosophy and used a process of induction whereby educators were inducted into a music/arts practice other than their own, thus providing opportunities for extension of “self” and a greater appreciation of “the other”. In addition, integration was implemented as an educational method whereby the arts were integrated with each other. The research project consisted of a series of five *iintsomi* workshops presented by me and my colleague, Bangikhaya Poni, at the University of Stellenbosch in November 2004 and again in April 2005.

¹⁰ For more detail, refer to Malan 2004, pp. 120–130.

METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

The study was empirical, employing a qualitative research methodology. Findings were based on direct observation during the workshops and indirect observation using feedback from the students via questionnaires. The greater project used action research whereby participants applied knowledge gained in the workshops to their specific teaching environments.

Babbie and Mouton (2001, p. 53) describe action research as “a cyclical inquiry process” which incorporates diagnosing a problem, planning action steps and implementing and evaluating outcomes. Mouton (2001, pp. 150–51) points out that most studies that involve the subjects of research (research participants) as an integral part of the design use mainly qualitative research methodology as a means of gaining insight into the lives of the research participants. He also notes that most forms of participatory action research are committed to empowering the participants and to changing their social conditions. A distinctive feature of action research is that the research process is “carried out in collaboration with those who experience the problem, or their representatives” (Babbie & Mouton 2001, p. 63). Participants are defined as co-researchers who co-manage the research (Babbie & Mouton 2001, p. 64).

PRESENTATION OF WORKSHOPS

The participants, practising generalist educators from disadvantaged schools in the area surrounding Stellenbosch, were approached by the organisers to enrol for the course. Heads of schools selected who should attend. They were briefed at an initial session, where the following steps were used to introduce them to *iintsomi*. Firstly, the participants were introduced to *iintsomi* as they occur in indigenous societies. Secondly, an appropriate animal story, namely “How the leopard got his spots” was selected and told to the participants by the two presenters (Bangikhaya Poni and myself). Thirdly, key questions were asked to gauge whether they had grasped the main points of the story, for example: How does the story begin? What problem arises? What lessons can we learn from the story? Fourthly, the participants were divided into groups to explore the different components of *iintsomi*, namely drama, music, movement and visual arts.

The workshops ran concurrently over three days, with Bangikhaya presenting the drama and movement, while I presented the music and mask-making workshops culminating in a combined performance. The drama workshop focused on the storyline and the development of the narration and spoken parts, punctuated by the core clichés. Role-play, development of characters and improvised speech were included.

The movement workshop concentrated on basic stretching, warm ups and breathing exercises, the use of the body in and through space, and exploration of the daily routines of the animal characters in their natural environments as a means of extending their parts through movement. Dance steps were not taught, although they could have been included.

The music workshop included exploration of sound using a variety of instruments (conventional percussion and “found” instruments) as accompaniment for the movement/actions of the characters and the weather elements, for example, rain, thunder. Musical elements, for example, timbre, tempo and dynamics, were explored. Key characters and key points of the story were identified and instruments selected to represent them. A sound chart initially guided participants in the sequence of the storyline but was later set aside as the story became familiar. Singing and rhythmic chanting of refrains (core clichés) were included in the storyline and repeated as often as needed, accompanied by clapping and vocal effects. Listening, observation, memory and improvisation skills were incorporated.

In the visual arts workshop masks for each of the characters were created from waste materials. In addition, some participants created basic costumes using black garbage bags sponge painted to create vibrant patterns. Masks and costumes were worn in the performance to enhance the characters and their movement. Each of the component workshops had tasks to be completed by the participants, for example, creating a sound chart for a different story and creating a mask for a different animal character.

Once all the workshops were completed, the different components were brought together in a final performance consisting of storytellers/narrators, performers/actors, musicians and audience (consisting of musicians and actors). Simple props and large cloths were used to demarcate a performing space. The audience of performers sat in a circle formation with the storyteller to one side.

MODEL FOR *IINTSOMI* ADAPTED FOR MUSIC/ARTS EDUCATION

The following model was used to implement the *iintsomi* workshops.

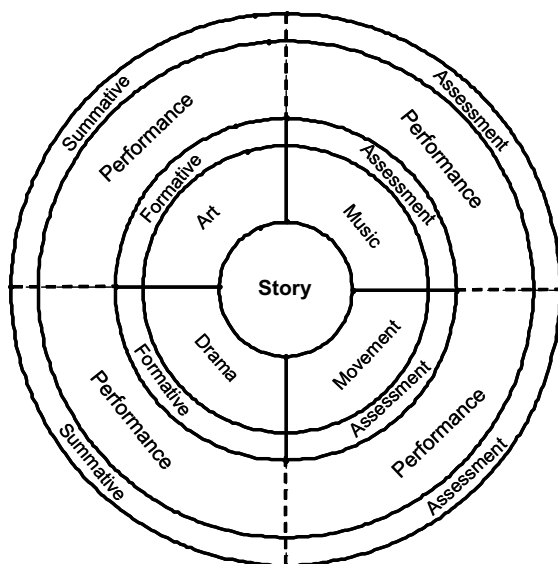


Fig. 1

1. Start with a story;
2. The four components, namely Music, Movement, Drama and the Visual Arts, are worked on separately;
3. Formative assessment occurs in each component;
4. The performance brings all four components together;
5. Summative assessment of whole performance occurs.

RESULTS

The following summary is based on the results of the questionnaires completed by the participants in the workshops. Thirty educators attended the workshops, of which 90% were generalist educators (not specially trained Arts and Culture educators). Most of them teach Grades 4 to 6. They teach Arts and Culture individually and in teams (approximately 50:50). Most of them enjoy teaching the learning area and rate their skills as average. The difficulties they encounter are planning of lessons, lack of resources, assessment and creative ideas. The feedback about the content of the workshops indicated that a majority rated the *iintsomi* workshops as the most useful part of the course. Many had already applied the material in their schools with great

success. When asked which part of the course they had implemented in their own classes and how it had gone, participants responded with the following:

"storytelling and masks – it went well and the children love it!"

"iintsomi – we were so excited and all were actively involved and enjoyed it"

"dance, drama and the use of instruments in iintsomi – so far so good!"

"the creation of stories and the presentation – the learners are enjoying the process most of all"

In an attempt to answer the main research questions of this study (How can educators be empowered to teach Arts and Culture? Can indigenous oral narratives such as *iintsomi* be adapted for use in a contemporary school environment?) the following recommendations are made. Firstly, workshops could be offered locally and regionally to train and retrain generalist and specialist educators in planning and processing an intercultural, integrated Arts and Culture curriculum. Secondly, a database of community culture bearers and experts could be created to source contributors for these workshops. Thirdly, a manual of tested ideas and projects drawing from the diversity of resources available in South Africa could (should?) be compiled and made available at these workshops.

CONCLUSIONS

Storytelling, both as a global phenomenon and in the form of indigenous oral narratives, such as *iintsomi*, empowers educators to teach Arts and Culture or similar music/arts programmes in the following ways: it creates opportunities for intercultural exchange between learners based on a praxial philosophy and process of induction; it is a doorway to integration of the arts and provides a way for educators to plan, implement and assess an integrated Arts and Culture curriculum; existing indigenous oral narratives such as *iintsomi* and other global stories are readily accessible to educators and are easily adapted for use in schools; the teaching/learning environment is enriched and strengthened.

Storytelling has the potential to draw together people from diverse worlds, crossing borders of time and place, thereby creating a kaleidoscope of cultural expressions and changing identities. *Iintsomi* have the dual role of preserving valuable indigenous knowledge and embodying sound educational principles. It is for these reasons that storytelling and *iintsomi* in an adapted form should be considered as viable tools for the empowerment and enabling of music/arts educators globally and in South Africa.

REFERENCES

- Akrofi, E. 2001. Is the South African renaissance possible without education in the performing arts? Unpublished paper presented at the 41st *International World Education Fellowship Conference*, Sun City, South Africa, pp. 1–16.
- Babbie, E. & Mouton, J. 2001. *The practice of social research*. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Bettelheim, B. 1976. *The uses of enchantment: The meaning and importance of fairy tales*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Blacking, J. 1976. *How musical is man?* London: Faber & Faber.
- Bloomfield, A. 2000. *Teaching integrated arts in the primary school*. London: David Fulton Publishers Ltd.
- Elliott, D. 1996. Consciousness, culture and curriculum. *International Journal of Music Education*, 28, pp. 1–15.
- Flolu, E. 1996. Music education in Ghana: The way forward. In M. Floyd (ed.) *World musics in education*. Aldershot: Scholar Press, pp. 157–185.
- Fretz, R. 2004. Dialogic performances: Call and response in African narrating. In P. Peek & K. Yankah (eds.): *African folklore: An encyclopedia*. New York and London: Routledge, pp. 81–83.
- Fox, D. 2003. *Stories matter*. Urbana: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Herbst, A. & Ng'andu, J. 2004. Lukwesa ne Ciwa – The story of Lukwesa and Iciwa: Musical storytelling of the Bemba of Zambia. *British Journal of Music Education*, 21 (1), pp. 41–61.
- Ibarretxe, G. 2005. Cultural diversity and music education in Navarre: Steps towards an intercultural perspective in primary school. In M. Mans & B.W. Leung (eds.): *Music in schools for all children: From research to effective practice*. Granada: University of Granada Press and ISME, pp. 121–135.
- Jordan, P. 2004. *Tales from Southern Africa*. Johannesburg: A.D. Donker Publishers.
- Joseph, D. 1999. *Outcomes-based music education in the foundation phases at independent schools in Gauteng, South Africa*. University of Pretoria. Unpublished doctoral thesis.
- Kruger, J. 1996. Three South African song stories for use in the classroom. *The Talking Drum*, (6), 2–5.
- Kwami, R. 1998. Non-Western musics in education: Problems and possibilities. *British Journal of Music Education*, 15 (2), 161–170.
- Malan, S. 2004. *Celebrating cultural diversity: Implementing an integrated approach to arts and culture in the intermediate phase of Curriculum 2005*. Unpublished Master's thesis, Stellenbosch University.
- Mans, M. 1997. *Namibian music and dance as ngoma in arts education*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Natal.
- Moore, B. 1994. Multicultural education in South Africa: Some theoretical and political issues. *Perspectives in Education*, 15 (2), 237–263.
- Mouton, J. 2001. *How to succeed in your master's and doctoral studies: A South African guide and resource book*. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

- Nompula, Y. 1988. *Xhosa children's songs*. Unpublished Honours thesis. University of Natal.
- Nompula, Y. 2002. Xhosa children's songs. *The Talking Drum*, (18), 4–8.
- Nzewi, M. 2001. Music education in Africa: Mediating the imposition of Western music education with the imperatives of the indigenous African practice. In C. van Niekerk (ed.) *Proceedings of the Pan African Music Educators' Conference*, Lusaka, Zambia, pp. 18–37.
- Oehrle, E. 1987. *A new direction for South African music education: A creative introduction to African, Indian and Western musics*. Pietermaritzburg: Shuter & Shooter.
- Oehrle, E. 1998. Challenges in music education facing the new South Africa. *British Journal of Music Education*, 15 (2), pp. 149–154.
- Oehrle, E. 2001. Towards a philosophy of education through music/arts for Southern Africa. In C. van Niekerk (ed.) *Proceedings of the Pan African Music Educators' Conference*, Lusaka, Zambia, pp. 104–114.
- Pinkola Estes, C. 1992. *Women who run with wolves*. London: Rider.
- Russell-Bowie, D. 1998. Music working in harmony with the other creative arts. Unpublished paper presented at the 23rd International Society for Music Education World Conference. Pretoria, South Africa.
- Salie, I. 2005. Once upon a time in South Africa. *Weekend Argus*, 10 September 2005.
- Scheub, H. 1975. *The Xhosa ntsomi*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Smuts, H. 1999. *Africa meets Africa*. Rotterdam: World Museum.
- Stephens, J. 1997. Towards a model of integration. In S. Leong (ed.): *Music in schools and teacher education: A global perspective*. Nedlands, Western Australia: International Society for Music Education Commission for Music in Schools and Teacher Education, pp. 59–64.
- Taylor, C. 1994. The politics of recognition. In A. Gutman (ed.) *Multiculturalism: Examining the politics of recognition*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 25–73.
- Thorsén, S.-M. 1997. Music education in South Africa: Striving for unity and diversity. *Svensk tidskrift för musikforskning*, 79 (1), pp. 91–109.
- Thorsén, S.-M. 2002. Addressing cultural identity in music education. *The Talking Drum*, (17), pp. 18–21.
- Van der Merwe, W. 2004. Multiculturalism and the humanities. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 18 (2), pp. 151–162.
- Van Niekerk, C. 1997. Recent curriculum development in South Africa. In S. Leong (ed.): *Music in schools and teacher education: A global perspective*. Nedlands, Western Australia: International Society for Music Education Commission for Music in Schools and Teacher Education, pp. 267–269.
- Volk, T. 1998. *Music education and multiculturalism: Foundations and principles*. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Wajnryb, R. 2003. *Stories: Narrative activities in the classroom*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wikipedia. http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_Cape_Province.html [Date of access: 11 September, 2005]

DJEMBE, DARBUKA OR DRUM SET IN MUSIC SCHOOL - CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN SCANDINAVIAN MUSIC EDUCATION

Eva Fock, Independent ethnomusicologist, Denmark

ABSTRACT

African and Latin American music, or should I say certain elements of African and Latin American music, dominate the diversity arena of Scandinavian music education. From the south of Denmark to the north of Norway *djembe* drums and marimbas have become symbols of cultural diversity. Apparently it does not matter whether the initiative for the project originates from a musical and didactic point of view or from a growing interest in multicultural topics related to the integration of immigrants, even though Scandinavian immigrants predominantly come from the Middle East. But why?

In this essay I want to look at the relationship between the pedagogical aims, the pedagogical practices and general rationales behind education and what these mean both for music education and to the immigrants. Conclusions are drawn from interviews with music teachers and leaders of music schools in different parts of Scandinavia, combined with my own observations from visits to music schools in Sweden, Norway and Denmark.¹

The study of cultural diversity in music education is positioned between at least three discussions: a) musical style; b) pedagogical practices and music education in general; and c) political discourses on cultural diversity.

It is the aim of this essay to discuss the African/Latin American domination of the diversity arena² of Scandinavian music education, in relation to the present situation, where people from the Middle East form the largest immigrant population. The analysis

¹ This project was made possible thanks to the support from NOMUS, Nordic Music Committee, and MUSAIK, the Nordic network for diversity in music education. I would furthermore like to thank Christy Smith for her corrections of my English.

² By “diversity arena” I refer to activities and programmes explicitly focusing on the inclusion of non-Western music.

will focus on the didactics of music education in this context of cultural diversity, combining the musical, the pedagogical and the political discussions.

BACKGROUND

This study of cultural diversity in Scandinavian music education focuses on music schools, where children and youngsters are offered the opportunity to learn instrumental skills in their leisure time, particularly in Western music styles.

The idea for this essay emerged from a project³ that took place in 2004/5. This project aimed to identify and explore pedagogical practices in Scandinavian music education that included Middle Eastern⁴ traditions. The initial focus of the project was on musical didactics, related to a wider discussion on aim and content. Two conditions formed the background for this project: a) the general underrepresentation of youngsters with Middle Eastern background in music education; and b) the absence of Middle Eastern music in music education⁵ (Fock 2000; Lundberg *et al.* 2003). African music (and to some extent also Latin American music) dominated the diversity arena of music education in all the Scandinavian countries. Different Latin American and African drums (especially the *djembe* had become the symbol of African music) had found their way to the classrooms. Middle Eastern music (sometimes symbolised by the vase drum *darbuka*), on the other hand, was only presented at schools through sporadic Oriental school concerts or through general cultural projects, mixing exotic food, dance and music.

It should be stressed here that raising this question is an attempt to question neither the importance nor the relevance of African music in Scandinavian music education. It is very important to teach both African and Latin American music in music schools. This should not be seen as a competition between different cultures, but as a pedagogical reflection questioning the absence of Middle Eastern music and the stereotypical image of African music and African culture in general.

³ During the project I visited 19 institutions active within multicultural music education in Denmark, Sweden and Norway.

⁴ I include music from the Arab world, Turkey, Iran and even Pakistan (Northern India), all Muslim cultures in “Middle Eastern music”. Often this music is categorised as Oriental music, associated with certain commonalities, though also including many local differences and diversities. Most immigrants to Scandinavia come from this region.

⁵ This was confirmed by the MUSAIK network in their conclusions.

CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN SCANDINAVIAN MUSIC EDUCATION - AN OVERVIEW

Before giving an overview of the actual activities in Scandinavian music education, it might be useful to clarify the central terminology around “cultural diversity in music education”.

THREE PERSPECTIVES ON CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN MUSIC EDUCATION

The term “cultural diversity” in music education can be viewed from at least three different perspectives. From a **musical perspective** cultural diversity implies that the music that is taught is either a) diverse in itself (in the sense of being a hybrid, a conscious and time-bound mixture of different musical traditions), or b) it differs geographically from the dominant musical tradition of the country where it takes place (in this case the Scandinavian countries), thereby adding a dimension of diversity to the national music scene. From a **human perspective** cultural diversity implies that either a) the people involved (teachers and/or pupils) represent different national/ethnic backgrounds, thereby making cultural diversity a kind of basic premise, or b) the people involved might differ from the national majority, thereby adding a dimension of ethnic/national diversity through their presence. Finally, from an **ideological perspective** cultural diversity might imply either that: a) music education is a political challenge, a collective responsibility for the whole of society (including the public institutions), or b) music education is a way for different cultural groups to learn about each other or themselves from a new perspective.

All three perspectives similarly define diversity as either a) an inclusive diversity, where the diversity is embedded in what exists already, rather than being presented as alternative to this, or b) through an additional diversity presenting an alternative to the dominating culture of the nation.

Taking a closer look at the three perspectives, one should be aware of certain embedded problems. One very important issue is the cultural hierarchy and the power relations within diversity. The relationship between Western music and music from other parts of the world, especially from Africa and the Middle East, is one of fundamental inequality⁶ (Berg 1998; Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997; Thorsén 2002, 2003). This also applies to the relationship between individuals, especially in attitudes towards Middle Eastern and African immigrants in present-day Scandinavia. This means that diversity in the sense of bringing musics or individuals together does not necessarily lead to equality and

⁶ This issue is discussed in Stig-Magnus Thorsén’s and Dawn Joseph’s essays in this book.

intercultural understanding, an assumption often presented as a motivation for multicultural projects. The cultural encounter (where people of different backgrounds or different musical traditions meet) might lead to the opposite of what is expected through the ideological perspective, namely cementing or even enlarging the distance. Much depends on how the encounter is facilitated (Drummond 2005, p. 4; Fock 2004, p. 7).

Thus it is important to explicitly identify how the perspectives define parameters and not assume that all three (music, individuals and ideology) will automatically promote cultural diversity in the same way. For example, an activity that focuses on the cultural diversity of the participants will not necessarily lead to an interest in ethnic or hybrid music amongst the children, nor are children from immigrant families necessarily interested in instruments related to their national/ethnic background – they sometimes prefer mainstream popular music (Baumann 1996; Fock 1998; Lundberg *et al.* 2003; Smith 2000, p. 152–2). Similarly, projects that focus explicitly on Middle Eastern music are not necessarily aimed at people from the Middle East.

TWO TYPES OF MUSIC SCHOOLS

Music schools have changed over the years. Originally solo lessons in a variety of classical Western instruments were offered, with the aim of preparing the pupils for professional music educations (e.g. at the conservatoires). Later, musical playgroups, group lessons that included movement and other more social activities were added, although instrumental training still dominates most music schools. Today music schools cover a vast range of activities, including those that address cultural diversity and multiculturalism.⁷ Two types of music schools need to be explained at this point:

CONVENTIONAL MUSIC SCHOOLS

Conventional music schools (public and private) dominate the market. These schools impose a student fee that is high enough to restrict the user group to the middle (and upper) class. According to telephonic information obtained from the Danish Music Council in 2002, approximately 11% of the children in Denmark attend activities at their local music school. The same has been observed in Sweden (Lundberg *et al.* 2003, p. 378). As previously mentioned, the programmes are dominated by solo instrumental lessons of Western classical music. More recently popular music has entered the music

⁷ I use multiculturalism in the sense of a specific hierarchic relationship between different cultural groupings in society, whereas cultural diversity refers to a plurality that allows for more complex and dynamic relationships, but may at times reject the hierarchic structures.

schools, not only in the form of teaching new instruments but also in bands and other types of collective music-making.

Within the conventional music schools we find a few examples of cultural (ethnic) diversity in the programmes, generally focused on African drum lessons (the *djembe*) and marimba/xylophone (including African dancing, *capoeira* and Latin dances, if the school includes movement). The few attempts that have been made to introduce, for example, Middle Eastern instruments into the existing programmes to attract pupils from these cultures⁸, have generally failed in all three countries. Special projects aimed at the ethnic minorities have been organised, partly with the support of organisations related to ethnic minorities⁹, and partly through co-operation with general basic education. These activities are mostly financed by external sources related to some kind of ethnic minority or integration funding, and are therefore vulnerable to political changes. Four types of projects should be mentioned.

1) In only one of the larger Scandinavian cities did we find a music school exclusively devoted to **world music**¹⁰, which taught instrumental/vocal traditions and dance from other parts of the world. It started as a project, but has gained a more permanent status as a semi-independent institution. Although this project was originally intended to aid in the integration of ethnic minorities into Danish society (particularly those from the Middle East), the music taught has little, or no, relation to this region. In 2006 the courses included music from Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka, Spain, Cuba, Mozambique, Senegal and Ghana.

2) **Special departments** or courses, focusing on specific regions or genres¹¹ are often established with the assistance of teachers who have already built up their own programmes as private teachers outside the conventional music schools (e.g. in “ethnic” music schools – see below). These teachers have personal experience of (and training in) the traditions they teach, sometimes including Middle Eastern music.

⁸ It is possible to find especially Middle Eastern percussion and *saz* in the programmes in areas with many immigrants, but often they are not established due to a lack of registrations.

⁹ Like Indian, Arab, Turkish and Iranian organisations or friendship organisations.

¹⁰ World Music Centre in Aarhus.

¹¹ South Asian music at Oslo Music and Culture School; a Turkish choir at Ishøj Music School; Arab, Persian, African and Latin American music at Lärjedalens Dance and Music School in Gothenburg; and African music at Akershus Music School in Oslo.

3) **Festivals** or short intensive events arranged by the music schools focus on musics around the world.¹²

4) In an attempt to reach the ethnic minorities, the conventional music schools develop co-operational projects with ordinary schools, as public primary and secondary schools reflect the cultural diversity of the population much better than the music schools. In some cases teachers from the music school (e.g. from the special world music lines) join the music lessons of the ordinary schools on a temporary basis, introducing the pupils to the musical diversity of the world.¹³ In other cases special attempts have been made to develop musical hybrids based on a kind of cultural representation, where the pupils (with their different cultural backgrounds) are expected to bring elements from their background traditions into the new work.¹⁴

None of these projects have resulted in large-scale and long-term enrolment of pupils from immigrant backgrounds to the conventional music schools.

"ETHNIC" MUSIC SCHOOLS

More recently "ethnic" music schools have emerged, established by, and for, special ethnic/national communities (e.g. Iranians, Turks, Indians/Pakistanis and Arabs), at the initiative of music enthusiasts (sometimes themselves musicians who also want to teach).¹⁵ These activities can be seen as a kind of special provision, mostly taught in the native language of the specific minorities (therefore considered quite exclusive), completely arranged at the initiative of these minority communities. Many of the teachers involved have found it difficult to get work within the traditional music schools, though they have tried, as too few have enlisted for their courses.¹⁶ The weekly (weekend) lessons by local teachers might be combined with monthly or quarterly

¹² For example, Persian, Brazilian and Ghanaian music were promoted at workshops at the Brøndby Public Music School.

¹³ World Music Centre in Aarhus; Project World Music in the public school in Copenhagen; Roskilde Music School; World Music Schools in Malmö; Klangrikt Fellesskap in Oslo; Brøndby Public Music School.

¹⁴ Copenhagen Public Music School tried to establish the project Integration and Intercreation, where the pupils should explicitly bring their cultural background into a creative process of composition.

¹⁵ For example, the Persian Music Association in Brøndby Strand; the Asian Music Association in Copenhagen; the Iranian Association in Stockholm; the Iranian Music School in Malmö.

¹⁶ For a discussion of reasons for this, see Fock 2000.

workshops, or master classes, with more experienced teachers and musicians from abroad, either from elsewhere in Europe or from the country of origin.

These lessons are generally more informal than those of the conventional music schools, taking place in groups with the teacher moving around the class to give individual coaching. The activities are also often stretched over a whole day. However, these activities have a lot in common with those of conventional music schools in that the focus is still on developing instrumental techniques, on the teaching of a specific musical tradition, and on achieving a high performance quality.

RATIONALES IN MUSIC EDUCATION

Though many questions can be raised in order to identify and understand what goes on within music education in relation to activities, genres and perceptions, one issue seems central: the relationship between why the educational projects are initiated and what actually takes place in the classroom. Frede V. Nielsen calls this “music pedagogical didactics” (Nielsen 1998, p. 20). Related to this central question are questions of pedagogical practice (Nielsen 1998, p. 22) concerning how the teaching takes place, where and with whom. Figure 1 is a model for understanding the relationship between these factors, where the five circles represent the questions raised concerning the pedagogical didactics (the grey circles) and the pedagogical practices (the white circles). The line connecting the five symbols their relationship to each other.

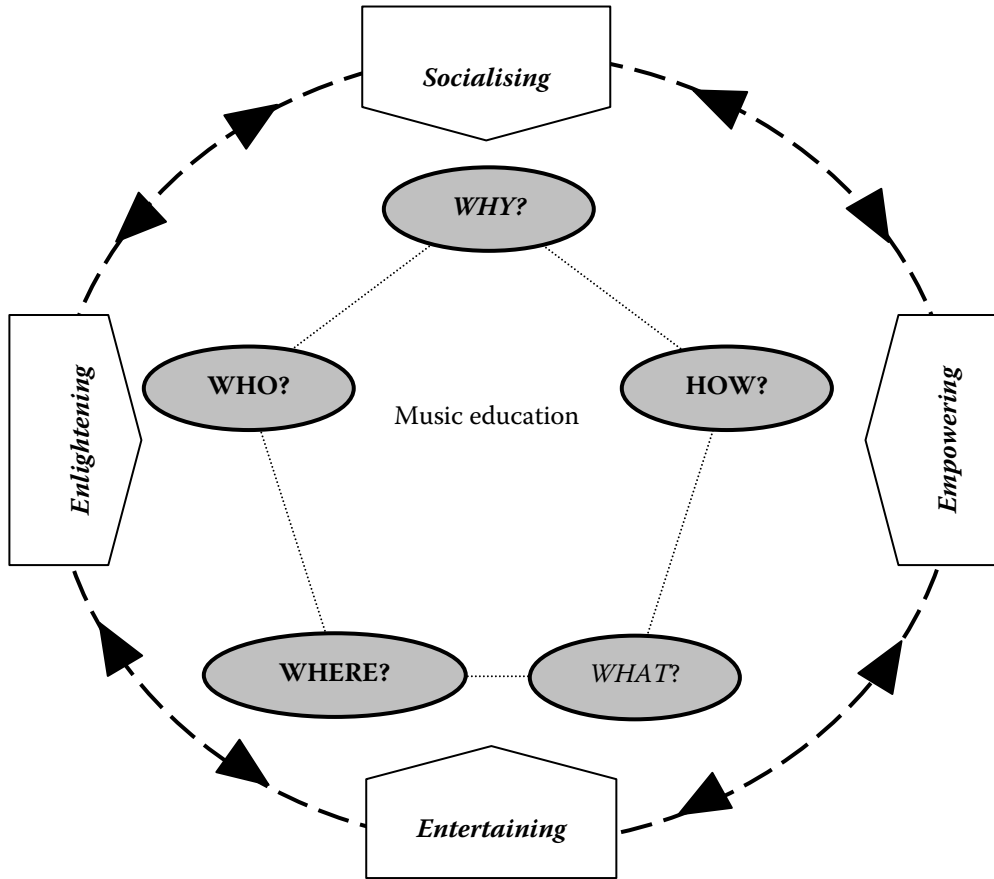


Figure 1. Rationales in music education

Behind both the pedagogical didactics and the pedagogical practices lie some kind of rationales (the large arrows in white). Rationales change over time (the small black arrows in the circle), thereby changing the whole aim, and thereby the didactics and practices of music education. These rationales are generally implicit, hidden or unconscious to the actual actors.

In the following section these four rationales will be presented¹⁷, describing their relevance to the concrete development of cultural diversity in Scandinavian music

¹⁷ The four rationales are derived from a model by Dorte Skot-Hansen, entitled "Explaining Urban Cultural Policies", which includes enlightenment, empowerment, entertainment, economic impact and experience (Skot-Hansen 2005). I have chosen the "-ing" form in all four rationales instead of the noun form, as especially the noun "enlightenment" is linked

education. Although the rationales represent a kind of chronology, starting with enlightening, it should be noted that enlightening, for example, does not lose its significance just because new rationales come to the fore.

ENLIGHTENING AS A RATIONALE

Enlightening as rationale brings the education and upbringing of new generations in focus:

Enlighten[ing]¹⁸ and education should ... serve to strengthen the democratic process, and knowledge of art, culture and cultural heritage can offer a contribution to this process. If the 'good culture' (which builds on a universal aesthetic hierarchy) was made available to all the population, it would slowly supersede the 'bad culture' (the commercial or 'low culture'), and all would become informed and educated citizens.
(Skot-Hansen 2005, p. 33)

Fundamental to this rationale we find four keywords, representing four levels of enlightening: insight, knowledge, education and reflection (Skot-Hansen 2005, p. 33). Layered within these aspects we can find traces of what one could call the cultural education or “self-formation” (Johansen 2002, p. 5)¹⁹ of the individual on a basis of classical tradition, a sense of quality and aesthetics. With education as focus, Terese Volk comments that “education cannot simply be an agency that passes on traditions, but must also challenge and clarify cultural values to promote self-actualisation through critical thinking” (Volk 1998, p. 7). This means that education should not be used simply to cement traditions, but needs to make people reflect, an aspect that becomes particularly important when the national identity comes under pressure due to cultural diversity.

ENLIGHTENING IN MUSIC EDUCATION

Conventional music education, as most of us know, is based on the classical tradition (the “grand tradition”, Lundberg *et al.* 2003, p. 424); it is a matter of shaping the individuals in a tradition and teaching new generations a predefined sense of quality. One could say that this form of education is based on a cultural rationale that presents

with positivist approaches carrying a large set of values that could be distorting in this context.

¹⁸ Originally enlightenment, here replaced by enlightening.

¹⁹ In Danish: *Dannelse*, in Swedish: *Bildning*, in German: *Bildung* and in French: *Culture générale*.

and preserves cultural values, or maybe even an aesthetic rationale that aims to shape an aesthetic understanding of beauty.

Even though enlightening as a rationale builds on a “universal aesthetic hierarchy” with an overall dominating Western heritage, the term is also relevant outside the Western classical repertoire. Insight, knowledge, education and reflection are not restricted to Western culture, but relate to a formal reproduction of tradition within a classical frame. Therefore some of the new ethnic music schools in Scandinavia are also a product of this rationale. They too want to present a tradition to new generations, they too want to give insight and knowledge, to educate and promote reflection, but on their own premises. They too want to communicate values of quality and aesthetics, trying thereby to shape the individual (and the group), but on their own (non-Western) basis. Through respect for their cultural background, they want to make the youngsters feel proud of themselves, as minorities (this also relates to empowerment, as we shall see later).

Noting the relationship between different aspects of pedagogical didactics and practices, it becomes apparent that changes within one aspect of a rationale results in changes in other aspects. In this case the “who” changes as the focus shifts from majority to minority, from children with Scandinavian background to children with Middle Eastern background. This causes the following changes to the rest of the questions:

WHAT: The instruments change from classical Western to other traditional instruments (Iranian, Turkish, Arab or Indian). The repertoire changes from classical Western music to music from classical traditions around the world.

HOW: The method of teaching changes from the traditional twenty-minute solo lessons to longer group lessons. There seems to be some kind of common understanding that Middle Eastern music should be taught more informally in Scandinavia. An “Oriental tea/coffee-house” reference is sometimes used, to create an informal space in which the pupils arrive and leave as they please, and where less experienced pupils attentively watch the teaching of the more experienced (although all students get some individual guidance during a day). The teaching material, on the other hand, has moved in the opposite direction. Here we find Western style solfège and notated scale training, far from the oral modal tradition of the Middle East, dominating both Middle Eastern schools in the West and in the Middle East.

WHERE: The change of structure (moving from twenty-minute sessions to a more flexible structure) makes it difficult to include these lessons in the conventional music schools. To some extent one might say that that form defines the place – outside the conventional system.

All in all the instrumentation, repertoire and teaching method can be seen as the result of a new “Middle Eastern” self-perception and identity among the immigrants in Scandinavia, as they (re)construct certain “Middle Eastern” characteristics and values. As argued by Stokes (1994, p. 15), “the role of Western ideas about ‘the Orient’, as is well-known from Said’s influential critique, has had immense implications for Middle Eastern musicians today.” This is the case not only in the Middle East, but also among Middle Eastern musicians in the West, where the immigrant communities themselves, unconsciously refer to these Western images of the Middle East in different ways.

It is interesting to relate the pedagogical practice of Middle Eastern music in Scandinavia not only to the practice of other musical traditions in the West, but also to the pedagogical practices in the Middle East itself. There we find a movement in the opposite direction in that many music schools in modern-day Syria are arranged just like the European schools, with solo lessons, 20 minutes per pupil, using Western teaching methods and materials.²⁰

It is worth noting that neither African nor Latin American music traditions are included in activities based on this rationale because neither is considered to have a “high culture” and “grand tradition”. This has to do with the general image of these musical traditions as “folk traditions” without a “high culture”, being more “primitive” in both expression and form than Western classical music and other “high” classical traditions (like some Persian, Indian and Arab music).

SOCIALISING AS A RATIONALE

A general social awareness and increasing focus on youth culture influenced the educational system during the 1970s and 1980s in most of the Scandinavian countries. Values such as mutual respect, support for the weak and collaboration skills became important. The new keywords were: creativity, self-realisation, social competence and solidarity.

SOCIALISING IN MUSIC EDUCATION

The consequences of this shift in rationale from enlightening to socialising were less obvious in the music schools than in the general basic education, as many music schools remained focused on classical traditions, with their aesthetic values of “high culture”.

²⁰ These observations come from my research trip to Damascus and Aleppo in Syria and Tehran and Isfahan in Iran in November–December 2004, where I visited 5 music schools and interviewed music teachers.

However, new sources of pedagogical inspiration emerged in the music schools and a growing focus on social aspects increased. The effects were as follows:

WHAT: New instruments entered the music schools – first Orff instruments, then instruments from other parts of the world were introduced, such as African drums and Central American marimba. The repertoire also changed. First different kinds of folk music were introduced, then came African call-and-response singing along with African dance, samba groups and Caribbean percussion.

HOW: With the new instruments and repertoire came new ways of teaching. These foreign musical traditions were traditionally transmitted in the oral/aural tradition. Thus imitation and improvisation became a more widespread way of teaching and the lessons became more group oriented.

WHO: The new instruments were more accessible for (younger) children and for larger groups, so new groups were recruited, including younger children, pupils without specific musical skills and pupils from social groups that were less focused on the classical repertoire and enlightening.

WHY: Emphasis was placed on the quality of the process more than on the product. Thus making music together made space for a different kind of self-realisation and creativity. Furthermore, with the focus on the so-called third world countries, these kinds of projects expressed solidarity with the “weaker” cultures of the world. However, cultural diversity and multiculturalism played a very limited role in the discussions and when they were included, they seemed to be considered more as an “extra bonus”.

The music that was introduced was carefully chosen for its pedagogical qualities, which seemed to fulfil the aims of socialising. It was never the intention of the teachers or educational policy makers to present the diversity of African or Latin American traditions as such. For example, foreign solo instruments and genres never entered the Scandinavian music schools, and neither did epic songs and other a-metrical genres. In this way many of the stereotypes of African music as we know it today were created or cemented, such as that it is repetitive, accessible to outsiders, social and danceable.²¹

EMPOWERING AS A RATIONALE

The third rationale to be considered here, empowering, also comes from cultural political studies. Here, education becomes part of what Skot-Hansen calls “a cultural

²¹ This issue is discussed in the essays by Stig-Magnus Thorsén and Dawn Joseph in this book.

strategy to achieve social and political objectives” (Skot-Hansen 2005, p. 33). And she continues:

As opposition to the effort to support high culture, the purpose of cultural democracy was to promote the self-expression of special sub cultures, that is, culture should be used for confirming the identity and self-worth of groups and communities. (2005, p. 33)

Under this rationale education again becomes a tool for addressing and solving a series of social problems in the post-modern urban context, this time with the aim of allowing people to give voice to their different cultural expressions and values in the context of greater society. The keywords are: identity, inclusion, cohesion and diversity (Skot-Hansen 2005, p. 33).

EMPOWERING IN MUSIC EDUCATION IN GENERAL

In an attempt to address different subcultures, some music schools have since the 1970s intentionally tried to break their image of being predominantly middle-class institutions representing exclusively Western classical music. There is still a long way to go, but programmes focusing on group courses for day care children paid by the local authorities are a good example of this intention. Also attempts to promote the self-expression of certain subcultures (such as rock, hip-hop, rap, techno and scratch) have allowed many youth groups to use the music schools as a platform for their activities.

WHAT: The instruments and genres have moved away from classical music and Orff instruments used for socialising, in the direction of different genres within Western popular music.

HOW: The way of making and teaching music is influenced by the style of the music. Oral/aural methods of transmitting are once again required and more input is permitted from the pupils, in the form of choosing what to work with.

WHO: New groups of youngsters and new social groups have occasionally joined music schools that offer these musics, though the middle class still dominates for economic reasons (and by tradition).

EMPOWERING AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY

As a cultural political strategy related to cultural diversity and multicultural societies, empowering is used in relation to, for example, ethnic/marginalised minorities, to confirm identity and self-esteem in relation to the surrounding society. In an

educational context this agenda could mean both the acknowledgement of minority identities in order to avoid a loss of identity among these groups, and an interest by the majority to learn from, or about, the minorities (Drummond 2005, p. 2). These aspects of empowering are very relevant to the activities within general basic education, but they seem to have had limited relevance in music schools. Yet they are present to a degree in the music schools. However, it is worth taking a closer look at the actual activities, as there might be a divergence between how researchers and policy makers, teacher and music schools understand this concept of empowering, and whether the actual activities work in the right direction.

As mentioned previously, various strategies have been adopted to attract minority groups to music schools. For example, attempts to include Middle Eastern instruments in the programmes of the music schools, as a kind of “special provision” for different minority groups, focused on traditional instruments like *darbuka*, *saz* and *sitar*. Such attempts have met with very little success.

Collaborative projects including both music schools and general public schools have been tried in all countries in order to introduce minority children to the activities of the music schools, with the goal of encouraging them to enter the music schools later. Here we find three problematic tactics employed. Firstly, Scandinavian teachers introduce **Middle Eastern music** as the music of the minorities, but they confuse collective identities and individual identities in a patronising way, which makes the children feel misunderstood. Secondly, the schools have tried to construct a new **hybrid music** that brings the musical roots of the pupils together. However, in order to hybridise you need to know at least one musical tradition very well, and many of the minority children have very limited knowledge of the traditional music from their culture. They therefore find it difficult to identify with the project. Thirdly, the schools run projects presenting **the music of the world**, focussing generally on African or Latin American music. Hereby the direct link to a background culture is broken. The frame is one of general world perspective, equally (ir)relevant to all. This “world model” is interesting, partly because it is the dominating strategy, partly because especially African music has very little popularity among most Middle Eastern children, as the expressive freedom of the body in most African music making seems to provoke many Muslim children. A cultural hierarchy seems to exist for many Middle Eastern people in which black African music is often considered a “lower” art form.

The minority communities have established music schools for their own specific traditions, as we know from the so-called “ethnic” music schools discussed above. They work as a catalyst (inwards, towards the group itself) for the minority populations in

their attempt to promote their cultural roots and keep them alive, and sometimes also as an emblem (outwards, towards the surroundings) (Hammarlund 1990). But as these activities primarily point to education, insight, knowledge and reflection, with a focus on “high culture”, they also strongly represent the rationale of enlightening.

When asked why they do so little with Middle Eastern music, the leaders of the music schools generally began by listing practicalities like the difficulty of finding skilled teachers in these traditions and the present availability of both instruments and teaching materials for African and Latin American music at the schools. Other explanations include:²²

“The music is too difficult.” This kind of statement is generally made in reference to Middle Eastern rhythms and vocal styles;

“African music represents the roots of European popular music.” Afro-American popular music has some African roots which makes it easier for Westerners to engage in this kind of music;

“The students don’t want it.” This is part of a vicious circle: what student don’t know, they don’t like or trust;

“African music sounds good, it is fun” – a fact very relevant to music education. Yet it is worth asking, “To whom?” since, for example, some Middle Eastern children don’t seem to think it sounds good or is fun. This raises issues of who is deciding on educational policies for whom.

Their responses have nothing to do with empowering in any way. The leaders of the music schools generally prefer to keep music education free from too many political or ideological debates. This is very far from the discussions currently taking place among researchers.

The notion of identity, inclusion and diversity as central to the rationale of empowering is referred to by the American musicologist Volk, when she describes the American and Canadian situation on the basis of a social rationale, addressing demographic changes in society in different ways: “Through the study of various cultures, students can develop a better understanding of the peoples that make up American society, gain self-esteem, and learn tolerance for others.” She goes on to say that “students are not only entitled to learn about America’s Western music heritage, but also to learn to respect the music of its various cultural subgroups” (Volk 1998, p. 6).

²² The following quotations originate from interviews with leaders of the different music schools.

The difference in terminology for Western and ethnic music in the quotation is worth noting: students should **learn** about the Western music, but learn to **respect** the other. This kind of distinction mirrors an inherent hierarchic structure of knowledge, on the one hand, and respect (as a feeling), on the other hand. This diffuse and emotional way of dealing with diversity is central to this essay and the core problem in dealing with the matter.

When relating music education to empowering of specific groups, it seems to be done through identification. Large minority groups are identified with special kinds of music, related to some kind of (constructed) cultural background. Critical multiculturalism raises this question in different ways. The South African philosopher Willie van der Merwe is aware of the potential problems:

The aim of critical multiculturalism is thus to facilitate and foster a critical awareness of the cultural contingency of personal and communal identities, and therefore also a supplementary awareness of the possibilities, as well as the limitations of interpersonal and intercultural understanding, communication, recognition and tolerance in the public domain. (Van der Merwe 2004, p. 157)

Joe Kincheloe and Shirley Steinberg also address this question as part of their *Critical multiculturalism: Rethinking educational purpose* (Kincheloe and Steinberg 1997).

When the musical characteristics of different ethnic minorities are defined not by the groups but by the surrounding majority, we run the risk of stereotyping them in static (often reactionary) images of the cultures, rather than dynamic images where the individuals are entitled to choose for themselves. For example, the ways in which African music is presented within the rationale of empowering is very limited – it is almost always drums and dance, brought over from the rationale of socialising without reflection on a change of rationale. For the same reason Middle Eastern music is only seldom represented, and when it is, it is in the form of drums and dances from the traditional folk music. As previously mentioned, the stereotypes might also be confirmed by parts of the minority community.

Empowerment is a critical concept, because of the potential hierarchic structure it promotes by stressing the special relationship between majority and minorities, between the group(s) in power and groups outside power and between the group(s) in the centre and groups on the periphery of power. From this perspective it is not surprising, but nevertheless unfortunate, that the rationale of empowering is often understood as being in direct opposition to the rationale of enlightening, with all its connotations of “high” and “national” culture, as previously mentioned.

Imposing a specific culture on specific groups is problematic when it is linked to their personal identity. Middle Eastern children should not be expected to play Middle Eastern music, but should have the freedom of choice. On the other hand, Middle Eastern music should be available on the educational market both from a perspective of musical diversity and enlightening (many musics enrich a musical arena), and from a perspective of empowerment (visibility and recognition of minority cultures, without the minorities actively having to participate themselves).

ENTERTAINING AS A RATIONALE

A fourth rationale relevant to music education and to diversity has to do with entertaining, with keywords such as leisure, play, fun and recreation (Skot-Hansen 2005, p. 33). This rationale is often associated with poor quality. Especially from the perspective of enlightening, aspects of fun and recreation are looked upon with suspicion “when centres for experience and adventure give stronger priority to play at the expense of learning” (Skot-Hansen 2005, p. 35). There are good reasons for the suspicion as a new movement in education seems to prefer entertainment to knowledge-based education and is thus challenging the traditional values. Debates about teachers being entertainers rather than educators challenge the whole idea and identity of teaching. The question is where the limit lies.

ENTERTAINING IN MUSIC EDUCATION

This discussion is extremely relevant within Scandinavian music education, where cover versions of pop hits and teenage shows with minimal musical quality are gradually taking over at the traditional concerts. The new questions from children is no longer “How do I learn to play this?”, but “How do I become famous?”.²³ The consequences of this change of rationale are found on different levels of the pedagogical practices:

WHAT: The music has to be simple, popular, immediately accessible and extrovert. The instruments belong to these simple and popular genres, and they need to be performed preferably in ways that are characteristic of the popular style from which they are taken, but they are not really mastered.

HOW: There does not seem to be a need to learn an instrument or its technique and repertoire. Instead children want to copy a few pieces in order to show off.

²³ This point was made by experienced musicians of school concerts during an evaluation of school concerts in 2003.

Despite these pitfalls, one cannot simply disregard the entertaining rationale. Entertainment might also be seen as the key quality of music education. If we look at musical practices in other parts of the world, for example, in many African cultures, there is no problem with music education being fun; in fact this is even preferred. Music IS entertainment, and the most important motivation behind becoming a good musician is fun and pleasure.

The conflict arises when certain musical traditions (for example, African music) are exclusively presented in contexts based on a rationale of entertainment, while others (for example, Western classical music) work on other premises, like enlightening. Those genres that are included on premises of entertainment have to work within a more limited spectrum, which – once again – evokes the notion of a cultural hierarchy as instruments and genres have to be simple, thereby creating the perception that these cultures are simple.

CONCLUSION

So why African music and not Middle Eastern music? Enlightening as a rationale formed the pedagogical practices of music schools, no matter whether they focused on Western music or Middle Eastern music. The work was focused and quite effective. One might of course discuss or even disagree with the values embedded, but that is a different matter. With the introduction of new rationales over the years, pedagogical practices were adapted and any change within the practice resulted in changes on other levels in order to fulfil the goal of the new rationale. The relationship between rationales, didactics and practices is obvious when looking at what happened when music schools became part of a socialising movement.

When music education was confronted with empowering as a rationale, new problems followed. The diversity agenda put the system under particular pressure. By focusing on identity, relating collective cultural identity to individual identity, and confusing musical, human and ideological diversity both globally and locally (in Scandinavia), the educational potential of empowering became confused or blurred. Suddenly music schools had to take on social obligations with no clear pedagogical justification behind them. Consequently we find no clear relationship between the pedagogical practices and the didactics. This flaw is an important reason why these projects did not succeed. For lack of better ideas everybody continued to do what they already knew how to do, with very small changes being made to meet the demands of the new rationale.

The perspectives presented by Volk and others about empowering ethnic minorities refer to long discussions in countries like the USA, Canada and the UK. These countries,

with their large and relatively old African and Latin American population, were the first to address the issue of cultural diversity and to develop educational material and expertise. And in so doing they prepared the road for many others. They made it easy to start with these regions. Added to this is the fact that humanitarian relations had placed this music on the map, thereby further facilitating its introduction in the education programmes of European and Scandinavian countries. In addition to this we have the power of the Western-based record companies. They have made music from these regions accessible, thereby making it easier for the Scandinavians to hear this music, get used to it and finally learn it.

Finally, many who are active within music education (and arts education in general) want to keep the arts free from politics. This is an illusion, as music and art are often political by nature; nevertheless it is understandable. The arts need to fight for their integrity and definitions of quality are not bound to politics. Therefore many practitioners referred only to the pedagogical dimensions and the good pedagogical results of especially African music, not to a broader dimension of cultural diversity in all of the four rationales. Cultural diversity does not have to be restricted to the rationale of empowering or to the presence of immigrants.

It has been inspiring to relate a Scandinavian discussion of cultural diversity to a South African situation during the SSARN meetings, exchanging experiences and perspectives. The understanding of minority-majority, cultural hierarchies and cultural diversity has become broader and the limitations of time and place more obvious. Still, many of the perspectives and discussions also seem equally relevant at both ends of the 20th longitude.

REFERENCES

- Baumann, G. 1996. *Contesting culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Berg, M. 1998. *Hudud*. Stockholm: Carlssons Bokförlag.
- Drummond, J. 2005. Cultural diversity in music education: Why bother? In P.S. Campbell, J. Drummond, P. Dunbar-Hall, K. Howard, H. Schippers, & T. Wiggins (eds): *Cultural diversity in music education*. Queensland: Australian Academic Press, pp. 1–11.
- Fock, E. 1998. With the background in the foreground. *Young* 7(2), 62–77.
- _____. 2000. *Mon farven har en anden lyd? [Does colour have another sound?]*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Publisher.
- _____. 2004. *World.dk – erfaringer fra verdensmusikprojekter i skoler og på spillesteder [World.dk – experiences of world music projects in schools and at music venues]*. Copenhagen: Center for Cultural Political Studies.

- Hammarlund, A. 1990. *Från gudstjänarnas berg till Folkets Hus [From the mountain of God's servants to the community house]*. In O. Ronström (Ed.) *Musik och kultur. [Music and Culture]*. Lund: Studentlitteratur, pp. 65–98.
- Johansen, M. B. (Ed.) 2002. *Dannelse [Liberal education/self-formation]*. Aarhus: Aarhus Universitetsforlag.
- Kincheloe, J. L. & Steinberg S. R. 1997. *Changing multiculturalism*. Changing education series. Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Lundberg, D. Malm, K. & Ronström, O. 2003. *Music, media, multiculture*. Stockholm: Svenskt Visarkiv.
- Nielsen, F. V. 1994/1998. *Almen musikdidaktik [General music didactics]*. Copenhagen: Christian Ejlers Forlag.
- Said, E. W. 1978/1995. *Orientalism*. London: Penguin Books.
- Skot-Hansen, D. 2005. Why Urban Cultural Policies? *EUROCULT21: Integrated report*, (31–39). Helsinki: EUROCULT21.
- Smith, Z. 2000. *Hvide tænder [White teeth]*. Copenhagen: Rosinante Forlag.
- Stokes, M. 1994. *Ethnicity, identity and music: The musical construction of place*. Oxford: Berg.
- Thorsén, S-M. 2002. Addressing cultural identity in music education. *The Talking Drum*, (17) March, 18–21.
- 2003. *Världsmusik – musik med tid och plats för alla [World music: music with time and room for everyone]*. Unpublished paper, Gothenburg: Musikhögskolan.
- Van der Merwe, W. L. 2004. Multiculturalism and the humanities. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 18 (2), 150–162.
- Volk, T. M. 1998. *Music education and multiculturalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

WHY LOCALISE A CHURCH'S MUSIC? MUSICAL CHANGE, MEANINGS AND CULTURAL IDENTITIES IN THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN NAMIBIA

Jan Hellberg, Åbo Akademi University, Åbo/Turku, Finland

ABSTRACT

This essay aims to investigate the motives underlying a process of localisation in the music culture of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN). Culture is seen here as a process of construction of meaning, and music as a field of cultural meanings. The cultural identity of a human being is seen as consisting of identifications with discourses and practices that construct and represent a variety of group identities. I attempt to answer the question set forward in the heading of this essay through the statements of participants in the music culture of ELCIN. I do so by investigating the meanings that these persons attribute to phenomena regarding musical change in the church. I also attempt to discern if and how the attributed meanings are connected to the interviewed person's identifications with diverse cultural group identities.

INTRODUCTION

This essay stems from an interest in how musicians, who are members of a Christian church active in a specific cultural context, strive to express the Christian faith through music in ways that are relevant in this context. In some churches that have evolved from the work of missionaries originating from a different culture, music activities are dominated by musical styles that have been imported from this other cultural context. In such a situation, the abovementioned striving for contextual relevance can lead musicians in the church to initiate and sustain a process of change that can be called localisation. This essay aims to investigate the motives underlying such a process in the music culture of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia (ELCIN).¹

¹ I wish to express my sincere thanks to the leadership of ELCIN, the musicians, other church workers and church members I have met (including the personnel from the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Mission collaborating with ELCIN) for welcoming me and facilitating

The history of any Christian church in Africa, as well as that of its music, is a continuous interplay of external influences and internal, localising strategies of response, all mediated through the agency of individual human beings. Many elements originally brought by Western missionaries have been adapted and appropriated to form an integral part of the local music culture, and elements of local or other African traditional musics are increasingly being integrated in the music of the churches. Popular music, which in itself blends international, regional and local influences, also affects the music cultures of the churches. Because a local music culture in Africa today contains at least these three strands – pre-colonial musical traditions, imported and more or less localised Western music, and popular music – musicians involved in the localisation of a church's music can creatively appropriate influences from all these musics as participants in a continuous process of change.²

These possibilities lead to the question of motives: what influences do musicians in ELCIN wish to include in the church's music, and why? In this essay I attempt to answer the question set forward in the heading through the statements of participants in the music culture of ELCIN. I do so by investigating the meanings that these persons attribute to phenomena regarding musical change in the church. These are elements of musical structure (music sound), of performance (behaviour in making music) or of material culture (such as instruments) that are or are not a part of the music culture of ELCIN, and which, in the participants' opinions, should or should not be a part of this culture. I also attempt to discern if and how the attributed meanings are connected to the interviewed person's identifications with diverse cultural group identities.

my research. I also wish to thank the Research Institute of the Foundation for Åbo Akademi, The Swedish Culture Fund in Finland, Ella and Georg Ehrnrooth's Foundation, the Waldemar von Frenckell Foundation, the Research Centre of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Finland and Oskar Öflund's Foundation for funding the studies of which this essay is a part, as well as the Finnish Christian Foundation for the support of Science and Art for funding my latest visit to Namibia in 2002.

- ² The term "traditional music" (or "traditional musics") is used here to denote African "folk" music traditions as opposed to imported Western music, locally composed "art" music and popular music. "Traditional music" is used because it is understandable in general discourse, and because it can denote one of the three main players in the patterns of musical influences in Africa. The use of the term is not intended to imply that this music would be in any way especially uniform, stable or self-contained, or that other musics do not evolve through tradition.

BACKGROUND

The roots of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia lie in the work of Finnish missionaries, which started in 1870 in an area in central northern Namibia (then South-West Africa) settled mainly by Owambo people. These missionary activities were extended to the western part of Kavango, in the north-eastern part of the country, in 1928. An independent church was founded in 1954 as the Evangelical Lutheran Owambo-Kavango church. The church's present name, adopted in 1991, reflects its new geographical situation. ELCIN's activities have expanded from their original northern rural setting to the towns and cities of central Namibia, where its members are now free to settle. In services and other activities the church mainly uses the Owambo languages Ndonga and Kwanyama and the Kavango language Kwangali. English is also used, but to a limited extent. ELCIN is rich in musical activities, although it has almost no paid musicians. There are choirs and singing groups in every congregation, and music is integrated into most, if not all, sectors of church work.

In relation to the music and musicians of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Namibia, I am both an outsider and an insider. I have not lived in Namibia, and during my brief visits I have had the role of an outside listener rather than that of a participant observer. On the other hand, the fact that I am a Finn and a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland lends me a certain insider status in ELCIN. This insidership is further accentuated by my family background, since my parents worked as medical missionaries in Kavango for five years before I was born in Finland in 1964. Before having visited Namibia, I already had the opportunity to learn choir songs from ELCIN musicians visiting Finland or from Finnish musicians who had spent time in Namibia. I am the conductor of a choir that performs some of ELCIN's music in Finland, which gives me, if not an insider status among ELCIN musicians, a kind of brotherly relation with them. Because of my insider position in relation to mission and church, a certain conscious distancing is doubtlessly needed in order to make analysis possible. On the other hand, this position has the advantage of giving insight into the thinking and actions of missionaries, mission supporters and church workers past and present.

MUSICAL CHANGE AND MEANINGS

During the past century an earlier conception of non-European music cultures as "primitive" and supposedly unchanging has given way to a view in which every music culture is seen as not only internally functional, but also as outwardly communicating and constantly changing. A study of musical change includes, in the spirit of Alan P. Merriam's model of a music culture (1964, p. 32), studying the conceptualisation

underlying the activities that contribute to processes of musical change, the activities themselves, and the artistic expressions – music sound and movement – they result in. As a development of Merriam's model, Timothy Rice (1987, p. 473) has opened up a perspective in which the researcher strives to investigate not only the social functionality of a music culture, but also its historicity and its dependence on the agency of individual actors. This is appropriate and necessary for a study of musical change. The question asked in the heading of this essay, "Why localise?" emphasises conceptualisation regarding music: the meanings that participants attribute to their musical activities and to the music they create and perform. These meanings are highly relevant in the historical, the social, and the individual aspects of a music culture.

Within a process of change in a music culture, it can be possible to discern subprocesses with a specific direction or quality. The term *indigenisation* has been used to describe a process of reintroduction of elements of traditional music into a music culture that initially, on contact with imported Western music, has replaced these elements with Western ones (Nettl 1985, pp. 89–90). The processes of change that the music cultures of some churches in African and Asian countries have been going through in the latter half of the 20th century have been described by Carol Babiracki as indigenisation (1985, pp. 96–100). Using this word can be problematic if its meaning is dependent on discerning what elements of a culture are truly indigenous. Instead, indigenisation can be defined as a process of introduction or reintroduction of elements that are perceived as indigenous by the participants in the process. The word *Africanisation* has sometimes been used as a geography-specific synonym for indigenisation. This term, too, can be understood as the introduction of originally African elements (which is problematic), or of elements that are perceived as "African", as originating from Africa (which is preferable). However, there is an additional alternative for the use of this word. If "African" instead is defined as all the elements of African culture today, the term Africanisation can be defined in a less retrogressive way. The Africanisation of a specific music can then mean bringing it closer to musics that can be found in African cultures today – not to some music that is supposed to have existed in the past. This definition makes it a geographically defined synonym for the term *localisation*, as it is used here.

Krister Malm has defined *localisation* as taking a musical style that has been adopted from another culture closer to the culture it has newly become a part of, and giving it new meanings in the process (Lundberg, Malm & Ronström 2000). The change that the hymns, liturgical music and choir songs, introduced in northern Namibia by Finnish missionaries, have undergone can be seen as a case of such localisation. In this essay, however, the term localisation is applied in a wider sense, as denoting a process that the whole music culture of ELCIN goes through. Because this music culture originally was

dominated by influences imported from cultures far removed, localisation in this case means bringing any part of the music of the church closer to the music culture of the society of which the church is a part. This can mean introducing influences from local or regional popular music, as well as adding influences from local or other African traditional music.

Whenever a means of expression is added to those previously in use in the church, as when the use of local traditional drums came to be introduced, the question of meanings is highly relevant. Persons supporting or resisting a specific change perceive the element of musical expression, which is under discussion, to carry certain meanings. They then express their opinions concerning the relation of these meanings to the meanings the church wishes to express. The meanings brought forth by the music might be seen by different participants as being in conflict with, neutrally adaptable to, or supportive of the meanings which the message of the church embraces. The opinion of any speaker in this debate is shaped by both music-cultural and theological interpretations: by his or her interpretation of the music in question, as well as of what the church should strive to express. The view of music-cultural matters, as well as the theological understanding of each person is shaped by the culture he or she participates in. However, since culture is not monolithic, there are always diverse opinions within a group concerning which meanings a music carries and regarding which meanings are suitable to be expressed in music-making in the church.

MEANINGS AND CULTURAL IDENTITIES

In the field of cultural studies, culture is understood to be a process of constructing meaning, and music is investigated as a field of cultural meanings (Leppänen & Moisala 2003, p. 83). Music can also be said to articulate or represent, as well as form and reaffirm, cultural identities (Born 2000, pp. 31–37). Cultural identity is here used to describe the meeting point between a culture and an individual. Because neither of these is stable, identity cannot be understood as an essentialist concept, neither on the personal nor on the collective level (Hall 1996, p. 3). Rather, the term should be used in a way that recognises that “identities are never unified ...; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions” (*ibid.* p. 4). Identities are constructed within discourse, and produced by specific strategies. They are also constructed more through the marking of differences, through what is left outside each identity, than through a would-be “natural” sameness (*ibid.* p. 4).

To state that a cultural identity denotes the meeting point between an individual human being and a culture does not, then, mean that an individual's cultural identity is that part of a stable self defined by the shared values in an unchanging culture of which this person is a part. Cultural identities are, rather, "points of temporary attachment to the subject positions which discursive practices construct for us" (Hall 1996, p. 6). The dynamic self chooses to take on a certain identity. This is a two-way process; a person (the subject) is compelled by a discourse or practice to become a part of it (to take on a subject position) and the person chooses to do so (to invest in the subject position). This process of taking on a subject position is called *identification* (*ibid.* p. 6). The cultural identity of a human being, then, consists of identifications with multiple discourses. During his or her life a member of ELCIN will be compelled – and may be willing – to take up subject positions in discourses and practices constructing (and representing) a variety of group identities, which are not mutually exclusive. Such identities can be more or less Africanity-related and/or Christianity-related.³

In the light of the above, it seems reasonable to believe that participants in musical activities in ELCIN wish to construct meanings that – as well as being expressions of spirituality that conform to Christian doctrine – can contribute in a desired way to the formation and representation of their own cultural identities. Meanings, that is, that contribute to the practices and discourses that they choose to identify with. If members of ELCIN perceive their cultural self-identities as both African and Christian, they wish to identify with both Christianity-related and Africanity-related discourses of cultural identity. This raises the question: does the music culture of ELCIN incorporate practices and discourses that are perceived by ELCIN members as relating to both Christianity and Africanity to an extent that they would regard as adequate? If participants in the music culture of ELCIN perceive this culture as rich in practices and discourses that construct and represent Christianity-related cultural group identities, but lacking in practices and discourses that give grounds for their Africanity-related counterparts, this dissatisfaction will fuel a process of change. Such a process can be called localisation.

³ A Christianity-related identity is to be understood here only as a cultural group identity, not as the holding of a world view that includes a spiritual dimension or as an inner conviction of the veracity of the Christian faith. The essence of human spirituality in general, or of Christian spirituality, is not seen here as connected to any specific cultural group identity. However, the discourses and practices – including means of musical expression – used by humans to express spirituality are, by necessity, culture-bound.

CATEGORIES AND REPERTOIRE

The musical genres brought by the missionaries – hymns, liturgical music and choir songs – have been joined by genres that do not exist in the Finnish “mother church”. At least two of these genres are clearly defined in the speech and the practice of church members (Löytty 2004, pp. 115, 124). One such body of songs are the choruses (Owambo: *uukorasa*), a genre of general singing that today can be found in churches from South Africa to Kenya.⁴ Choruses often have a polyrhythmic texture and a short AABB form, and are performed with movement. Another genre, peculiar to ELCIN, is called youth songs (Owambo: *omaimbilo govanyasha*). These songs are composed by youth groups in the congregations, and performed in a more introvert and quiet way than the choruses. Veikko Munyika (pastor and general secretary of ELCIN, b.1953) tells that the singing of choruses first came to the interdenominational Student Christian Movement (SCM), mainly through its contacts with South Africa. He attributes the difference in style between the youth songs and the choruses to the fact that the youth groups have lacked wider international contacts, leading to the development of an idiosyncratic style in the youth songs.⁵

There are three sources of repertoire for the music of ELCIN: imported compositions (from Western sources and from other African countries), compositions by ELCIN musicians (containing Western and African influences in varying degrees) and adaptations of traditional music. All persons interviewed support the adaptation of local traditional songs for use within ELCIN, though some are more engaged than others in championing this type of activity. Abisai Angombe (music student, b. 1978) wishes to use traditional songs because “they sound nice!”, and because they are “living songs”, enabling people to “move and be happy”. He suggests that the reluctance of some older church members to accept traditional songs in the church is connected to not seeing them as comparable to hymns (and thus having a sufficient status for use in the church), and comments that this difference of status is reflected in the Owambo terminology. Hymns are called *omaimbilo*, whereas traditional songs are referred to as *iiyimbo*, a more diminutive grammatical construction.

⁴ In Swahili-speaking areas, a song in this genre is called a *pambio*.

⁵ Today youth groups also sing choruses in addition to their own songs, as do adult choirs. Choruses are seldom counted as “songs” – a choir granted permission to perform “two songs” at a given point in a church service or programme can be found to add a chorus while going up front and another while returning to their seats.

SONG TEXTS

Concerning the adaptation of traditional songs for use within ELCIN, changing the words of the song so that they will convey a spiritual message compatible with the teaching of the Christian church is unanimously considered to be a prerequisite for it to be used in the church.⁶ Angombe states that the new, Christian words must be “straightforward” in the same way as the original traditional words, that their mode of addressing the listener should be compatible with that of the original song.

Munyika finds the choice of subjects for hymn and song texts in ELCIN one-sided. Most texts, whether imported or locally formulated, emphasise spiritual salvation and directing the soul toward heaven. In his opinion, song texts should give more room for people’s physical and social needs. Munyika (2004) states that a communal orientation, which does not neglect present responsibilities, is more compatible with Owambo tradition compared to an over-emphasising of the individual and the hereafter. He also sees such an orientation as more in line with the theology of St Paul and Martin Luther compared to the emphasis on personal salvation for the coming life in heaven that has been prevailing in song texts and sermons in ELCIN.

As examples of spiritual song texts with a social orientation, Munyika mentions some recent songs concerning AIDS and a body of songs dealing with the situation during the war years (1966–89). Helena Shuuladu (teacher and music leader, b. 1925), one of the most prominent ELCIN lyricists and composers during that period, mentions that the words of her songs are generally derived from the contemporary situation, from experienced difficulties, from reasons for gladness, or from other things. Johnny Hambyuka (ministry driver and choir leader, b. 1969) says that, contrary to what “people used to believe”, not only the hymns in the hymnbook can be used in the church, but “we can compose our songs according to what’s happening day to day”. Such calls for contextually relevant song texts do not necessarily imply a preference for a certain musical style, though they ask for recently and locally created texts instead of, or in addition to, the older, unchanging and often imported hymn texts. However, the “straightforward” mode of address and the possibility for rapid creation of new songs, typical of both adapted traditional songs and of choruses, make these genres well suited to serve the demand for topical actuality.

⁶ The youth music group Tupanduleni is the only ELCIN group I have encountered that sometimes performs traditional songs with original texts, but only in non-devotional settings, not in church services.

MELODY AND HARMONY

Questions of melody do not seem to raise much discussion on meanings among the interviewed persons, because the content of the words are seen as the main factor that makes a song suitable for use in the church. Concerning the adaptation of traditional songs, all are ready to use them in church without modifying their melodies. Angombe adds to this that sometimes a melody can be “a kind of spiritual melody”, that is, have a certain quality that makes it especially suitable for church use. Some peculiarities of Western melodies are frequently mentioned as difficult for ELCIN members to sing, especially minor keys and chromatic notes.⁷ When asked if there is anything in the imported Western church music that, in his opinion, is unsuitable for ELCIN members, Bishop Tomas Shivute (Bishop of ELCIN's western diocese, b. 1942) affirms that there are such elements “here and there”. He specifically mentions melody and says that the melodies of some songs that originate from Finnish revival movements are too sorrowful: “If that melody has been planted here ... then the way you sing is so sorrow ... although people don't question why ... but I think here and there it needs to be changed”. He hums a Finnish folk hymn melody in minor and comments: “It looks like you cover your face, and then you are nothing. Of course in front of God we are like that, but we also have to be happy a little bit, and not so hopeless”.

Four-part harmonisation by ear is common in the performance of both Western and local compositions in ELCIN. This practice, which Sakari Löytty (Finnish music consultant to ELCIN, b. 1959) calls “free communal harmonisation” (Löytty 2004, pp. 98–99), shows a blend of Western functional harmony and the tendency to sing in parallel thirds that is observable in local traditional music. Its pervasiveness is such that harmony is hardly ever a subject of discussion. The only problems mentioned concern divergence within parts and the difficulty of teaching a prepared arrangement when singers harmonise in their own way. Some aspects of Western harmonic practices have been assimilated by singers in ELCIN, while others have proved difficult to learn. Löytty mentions that parts of the liturgical music (which was composed in Finland at the end of the 19th century and contains harmonic progressions typical of the romantic idiom) have never been learned well by ELCIN members. This especially concerns the section in connection with Holy Communion, which is not sung every Sunday due to the communion not being a part of every service. Löytty points out that a crisis occurs when

⁷ In tonal Western music, chromatic notes are notes that differ from the scale that a piece of music is built on. A chromatic note most often occurs because of an underlying harmonic progression, and usually is raised or lowered by a semitone compared to a note in the scale. This is notated through a temporary chromatic mark.

members of ELCIN struggle to sing music that they have not mastered, but which is required to be sung because of its official status in the liturgy.⁸

MOVEMENT

The most common opinion among the interviewed persons is that moving when singing in the church is acceptable, and even desirable, but within certain limits. The most often mentioned reasons for singers wishing to move are that this expresses joy, and that it conforms to African culture. Bishop Shivute mentions movement as a positive contribution that local traditional music can make to the music of ELCIN, and states: "... people have to be joyful, singing, and ... must be also room for movement, and ... that it's a really happy occasion".

Matti Endjala (pastor, composer and choir leader, b. 1935) says that the movements associated with traditional songs can be used also when these songs are adapted for use in the church, because the movements are connected to a song and support it. Namene Kuugongelwa (deanery music leader, b. 1963) mentions that members of ELCIN participate in the practice of *uudhano* (a playful local tradition of dancing, drumming, singing and rejoicing) and thank God by dancing in this way. This is done in other settings, but not in the church. When asked why it is not done in the church, she does not give a specific reason, but simply states that it has not been put in practice.⁹

Munyika remembers that when the singing of choruses spread from the Student Christian Movement to the congregations, this new style met with resistance at first, because of an association of such "free" singing with so-called independent churches. The performance of choruses, with movement (always a step and sometimes choreography) and strong expression of feeling, was considered unsuitable in a traditional or mainline church such as ELCIN. In spite of this resistance, the use of choruses increased steadily also in the congregations, because, according to Munyika, "it was difficult to prevent it from happening. It's like a flood, it was just coming, little by little but surely."

⁸ Löytty speaks about the situation in 2002, since when new sets of liturgical music have been tried out.

⁹ The only use of *uudhano* I have witnessed in a church took place in connection with a performance by the choir Faleniko Evangeli, a regional ELCIN choir. During the refrain of a certain song (originating from Tanzania, but bearing rhythmical similarity to traditional *uudhano* songs), a young girl danced in front of the choir using *uudhano*-like movements – but as a solo performance, rather than a communicative group event as in traditional *uudhano* – while choir members played an *uudhano*-like rhythm on traditional hand drums.

Comparing hymns and choir songs, Hambyuka finds more physical expression in the latter genre. He says that when singing a hymn, even a hymn of thanks to God, “you will sing like someone who is just giving a message”. “Traditionally”, he says, when expressing praise, “you have to show it, with your voice, with your body, and the way you are acting”. He advocates using also means of bodily expression in ELCIN’s music, saying: “I think we just have to put all the culture together, then we have to continue singing ... cause us in Namibia, sometime also we can sing ... clapping our hands, that’s a matter also of thanks. What we are saying thank God and we are thanking, to show ... what we are saying is not only from the mouth, but from the heart and the whole body.” Paulus Imene (tailor and amateur music teacher, b. 1959) demonstrates that when thanking someone, an Owambo person is accustomed to accompanying the words of thanks with several claps of the hands. Without this gesture, he says, “it is not good”. He uses this example to support a localisation of the means of expression in the church, stating that “you would like to worship God in your traditional” since “everything you do is related to your traditional”.

Angombe speaks in favour of movement in the music of ELCIN. He would like people to be moving and rejoicing when singing in the church. He mentions that movement is needed when performing a chorus, because it expresses happiness and rejoicing. On the other hand, there are limits to the suitability of movement. He says that, when traditional music is adapted for use in the church, some of the dancing has to be reduced, left out or changed. “You can still move to the music, but now in a different way, because you are performing in a different place.” He tells about asking some singers in an ELCIN youth choir why they stand still while singing, and was given the answer that singing to God requires being quiet and refraining from movement. Discussing the matter, both he and I believed the reason for this lack of movement to be that church members were taught to do so by early missionaries and have continued this tradition without questioning it.

This idea of a simple causal connection between missionary influence and reluctance to move while singing in the church is challenged by Natanael Shinana (pastor, oral historian of the Kwanyama people and amateur musician, 1931–2004). He states that, according to the tradition of his people, anything done before the presence of God must be done solemnly, in a dignified and respectful way. This has also been the case in traditional women’s initiation ceremonies, called *efundula*, where the music accompanying the initiation itself, which happens in the presence of the divine, is solemn. This does not prevent participants from greeting a person with lively singing, clapping and dancing when she appears after having completed the ceremony. Shinana sees being still, not moving, before the divine as an element of premissionary Kwanyama

tradition. In his opinion, introducing dancing in the church would be imitating others' way of worshipping. He motivates his reluctance toward moving when singing with reference to the proper direction of communication in the service; anything that expresses a relation between person and person, rather than between person and God, would not be suitable.

The difference between the points of emphasis of Angombe and Shinana in this matter seems to point to a difference between generations in the conceptualisation of the appropriate expression of spirituality. The younger man stresses rejoicing, while the older speaks for solemnity. Shinana even complains that the older generation do not seem to have taught the younger well enough in this respect. The difference in their opinions can not be reduced to a matter of adhering more or less closely to missionary-taught practices; rather, both speakers motivate their standpoints with reference to Africanity-related group identities. Shinana stresses conformity with the Kwanyama tradition, while Angombe holds songs with movement to be the form of expression that church members, because of their cultural background, learn and engage in most easily. The reason for the difference between the standpoints of the two men seems to be that their respective generations have formed different relationships to pre-Christian cultural traditions. Because of a general modernisation in the whole society and a resulting loosening of ties to traditional culture in the younger generation, including a lessened knowledge of traditional ways of expressing spirituality, younger people do not attribute the same meanings as their elders do to moving, or refraining from movement, when singing in the church.

INSTRUMENTS

The use of hand drums is accepted in ELCIN today, but it has not always been so. Matti Endjala recalls using drums from around 1970. He says that drums were not used before that because they were considered to belong to heathendom, but they are accepted now. Shinana remembers drums being used from 1964 onwards. Several interviewed persons explain the earlier resistance to drums with an association of drums to ceremonies that Christians do not attend, for instance *efundula*. The drums used in the church today are most often fairly short drums made in Kavango, and not the longer drums used in the Kwanyama's *efundula*. This choice is not necessarily due to an association of the longer drums with non-Christian practices. The reason Shinana mentions for preferring

smaller drums for use in the church is of a practical nature; the Kavango drums make a smaller sound more suitable for church acoustics.¹⁰

Löytty (2004) tells of the reactions of some older parishioners to performances by the youth group Tupanduleni, which was founded through his initiative in 1998, but now operates independently. From the start this group made use of a section of four traditional drums, while some other choirs have had only one drum. The active playing on these drums by young women in the group made some older ladies start ululating and becoming excited, as if to say “So now you may [play drums] again!”

Munyika, when asked if he thinks that the change in attitudes toward drumming and dancing has to do with the passing away of the generation that associated these practices with pre-Christian times, affirms that “it has also something to do with that”. In his experience, some of the older generation resist both traditional instruments and the instruments of popular music. “There are still ... a few old people who would not feel happy with the drumming and the guitars and all these instruments ... But the wave is just too strong for them.” He refers to a general Africanisation in Namibian society, which also influences the music of the church: “... a wind of going back to the roots of the people, ... of finding ourselves as Africans ... everywhere people are searching for their own identity, and one of the key elements in our culture is this language, is music language, how to sing and how to express ourselves ... if it is happening outside the church, it cannot bypass the church, because church is part of the society, and the spirit of going back to the roots blows also from outside the church into the church.”

THE ROLE OF MUSIC

If the status of the drum has fluctuated over time from prominence (in pre-Christian times) to rejection (by the first missionaries and early local converts) to reinstatement (by ELCIN musicians today), the role of music itself never seems to have been put in question. There are indications that music-making has retained a place of honour in Owambo and Kavango during all the negotiations of its meanings caused by the cultural encounter. The sheer amount of musical activities in ELCIN speaks for this. Munyika says that “our people really like music. It’s amazing!” Organisers of events even have difficulties “saying it’s enough” to all the music groups that volunteer, so that a gathering can take up to seven hours. Löytty mentions the extent to which music permeates all sectors of the church. General singing, in addition to having a strong position in the

¹⁰ Availability is another possible reason for the choice of drums. The Kavango region is richer in forests, and items of Kavango woodwork, including drums, are for sale widely also in Owambo and in central Namibia.

Sunday service, is part of the activities of Sunday schools, confirmation classes, women's groups, men's groups and youth groups. Performing groups also abound. Every congregation has a congregational choir, which is a mixed choir, and in addition there are often several independent choirs.¹¹ In a school there may be several choirs connected to the Student Christian Movement, in which ELCIN members in many cases form the majority.

Hambyuka emphasises the importance of music in ELCIN. He states that using music is the best way to convey a message, and that the presence of music at a meeting raises both attendance and the attentiveness of the people present. Shuuladu echoes him, saying that the melody of a song attracts a person first, and that when this person comes to listen, he or she starts to think about the words. She also says that the influence of music sometimes is greater than that of preaching. In her experience, when someone preaches, some people perhaps do not really pay attention, but during a performance by a choir, or even by one singer, many people listen carefully.

CONCLUSIONS

The interviewed persons answer the question set forth in the heading of this essay by giving a variety of reasons for localising musical practices in the church. Some of these reasons can be interpreted as connecting to identifications with cultural group identities. Group identities that are implicitly or explicitly mentioned are an ethnic identity, a national identity, a regional southern African identity and a general African identity, as well as an ELCIN identity and a Lutheran identity. However, concerning the motives underlying the actions of participants in the music culture, meanings are more decisive than cultural identities, because meanings shape the contents of the cultural group identities with which participants identify. It is actually the meanings that a person attributes to an element of the music culture that form his or her standpoint and actions in relation to this element, be it western harmony or a traditional drum. A person's decision to promote or resist the use of a certain element of music culture in the church depends on the correlation of the meanings she attributes to this element and the meanings she considers suitable to be expressed by the church. Both sides of this correlation vary between individuals and over generations, and in addition, opinions on

¹¹ The term "mixed choir" refers to a (usually four-part) choir consisting of both women and men. In mixed choirs in ELCIN, however, women often sing tenor in addition to soprano and alto parts. In case of a lack of male singers, as in a rural locality seasonally depleted of its men through migrant labour, women can be found filling out the bass section as well, but in this case doubling the part an octave higher than the male basses.

suitability can be different for different church venues. Munyika says that “people will still hesitate to be too free in ... the church building, or the church setting. But when it is a conference, or just a meeting, people will get free and they will sing differently.”

Because cultural identities are shaped by attributed meanings, or “constructed within discourse”, there is not room for simplifying interpretations along lines of cultural group identities. Rather, the negotiation of the religion-focused cultural space called ELCIN should be seen in all its complexity. The interviewed persons take the standpoint, with more or less emphasis, that there is a need for a localisation of ELCIN's music, a need that springs from the wish for spiritual self-expression held by members of the church. In responding to this need, not even the persons most actively involved in championing localisation appear to be motivated by a simplified view of cultural identities. The members of ELCIN who now support localisation of the church's music do not wish for a cultural identity that is free from all Western influence (in which the scenario of indigenisation, if taken to its logical conclusion, would result). Participants in the music culture of ELCIN recognise that cultural hybridity has irreversibly become a part of their lives. Nevertheless, they wish to localise the music of their church by giving more space within it for musical means of expression that they perceive as African, because they feel that this can contribute to the fulfilment of the purpose of the church. Bishop Shivute confirms this, saying: “Let us build a music that is connected with our tradition and our past, in a new environment, in a new interpretation, but not really breaking away from what we are ... let us encourage those who are brave to compose new songs to do it, but remembering that ELCIN is more than a hundred years old ... because we are dealing with an old, old message in a new form, in our time and generation.”

INTERVIEWS

Angombe, Abisai, music student. Windhoek, February 21st, 2002

Endjala, Matti, pastor, choir leader. Nakayale, February 27th, 2002

Interpreter (Ndonga-Finnish): Sakari Löytty

Hambyuka, Johnny, ministry driver, choir leader. Windhoek, February 19th, 2002

Imene, Paulus, tailor, music teacher. Onandjokwe, March 5th, 2002

Kuugongelwa, Namene, deanery music leader. Ongwediva, February 27th, 2002

Interpreter (Ndonga-Finnish): Sakari Löytty

Löytty, Sakari, music consultant. Windhoek, February 22nd, 2002

Munyika, Veikko, pastor, general secretary. Oniipa, March 5th, 2002

Shinana, Natanael, retired pastor. Engela, March 7th, 2002

Interpreter (Kwanyama-English): Daniel Ndemuweda

Shivute, Tomas, bishop of ELCIN's western diocese. Nakayale, February 27th, 2002

Shuuladu, Helena, retired teacher, choir leader. Ongwediva, March 6th, 2002

Interpreter (Kwanyama-English): Erastus Shamena

REFERENCES

- Babiracki, C. M. 1985. Indigenisers. In B. Nettl: *The Western impact on world music*. New York: Schirmer Books, pp. 96–100.
- Born, G. 2000. Music and the representation/articulation of sociocultural identities (Section IV of Introduction). In G. Born & D. Hesmondhalgh, (eds.): *Western music and its others: Difference, representation, and appropriation in music*. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, pp. 31–37.
- Hall, S. 1996. Introduction: Who needs “identity”? In S. Hall and P. du Gay (eds.): *Questions of cultural identity*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: SAGE Publications, pp. 1–17.
- Leppänen, T. & Moisala, P. 2003. Kulttuurinen musiikintutkimus (Cultural studies of music). In T. Eerola, J. Louhivuori & P. Moisala (eds.): *Johdatus musiikintutkimukseen (An introduction to research in music)*. Helsinki: Suomen Musiikkitieteellinen Seura (The Finnish society for musicology). Acta Musicologica Fennica (AMF 24), pp. 71–86.
- Lundberg, D. Malm, K. & Ronström, O. 2000. *Musik – medier – mångkultur: Förändringar i svenska musiklandskap (Music – media – multiculture: Changes in Swedish musical landscapes)*. Hedemora: Gidlunds.
- Löytty, S. 2004. A creative collision? An investigation of the musical developments born out of the encounter between Finnish missionaries and Owambo culture. Unpublished thesis presented for the degree Master of Arts, Performing Arts Department, University of Namibia.
- Merriam, A. P. 1964. *The anthropology of music*. Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Press.
- Munyika, V. 2004. *A holistic soteriology in an African context*. Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications.
- Nettl, B. 1985. *The Western impact on world music*. New York: Schirmer Books.
- Rice, T 1987. Toward the remodeling of ethnomusicology. *Ethnomusicology*, 31(3), pp. 469–488.

INTONJANE MUSIC: A FORUM OF IDENTITY FORMATION FOR XHOSA WOMEN

Luvuyo Dontsa, Walter Sisulu University, South Africa

ABSTRACT

This essay discusses *intonjane* music, which highlights the hardships experienced by the *amaXhosa* women in the rural areas and how, through music, they rally around issues which affect and identify them as women. The investigation examines how gender identity is expressed in a female initiation slogan that is performed with ululation at the *intonjane* ceremony. Three examples of *intonjane* music, which reflect gender identity and resistance, will also be cited. References will be made to music that is performed exclusively by women at women's puberty rites and the music of women protesting against abuse of women by men. Intricacies of the lyrics, as well as interviews with old women and young girls will also be dealt with. Attire that includes beads and the *umngqungqo* (*intonjane* dance) will also be examined as decisive indicators of identity at the *intonjane* ceremony. Lastly, the author¹ addresses *intonjane* as an aspect of sex and moral education of women among *amaXhosa* people as an additional issue. The essay's descriptions illustrate that *intonjane* music is part and parcel of the social life of *amaXhosa* women. Thus *intonjane* music will be considered as contributing to the cultural identity of *amaXhosa* women.

¹ The author is a Xhosa-speaking African who experienced the *intonjane* ceremony both as a boy and a researcher. As a boy the author visited *intonjane* lodges with other boys at Madlangeni location, Mount Fletcher South Africa. He paid the dues that all boys are required to pay as they enter the *intonjane* lodge. On his first visit to the lodge, the chaperon asked one of the girls who stayed in the lodge to welcome and entertain him, as it was a normal practice for every boy who is visiting the lodge for the first time to be allocated to a girl. The author and the girl were not allowed to sleep together for fear that they may have premarital sex. The researcher has been involved in the performance of the rituals and sacrifices of *intonjane* rite when animals such as goats and sheep were slaughtered in the initiate's name. In this essay the author draws on all of this experience.

INTRODUCTION

Although the incorporation of music in the girls' puberty rite of *intonjane* has been reported in a number of African locations, I have not yet read literature on initiation music that focuses specifically on the topic of music and identity. Citations on initiation music and identity have been merely passing references. Hansen (1981) concentrated more on the theoretical analyses of the music than the exegesis of the lyrics. Dargie (1988) did not make any additional observations to those of Hansen. Soga (1931), Hunter (1961), and Levine (2005) focused on the description of the initiation dance. Laubscher (1938) did not really consider *umngqungqo* (dance).

Blacking observed that the *domba* dance of the Venda people is about motherhood, the development of the child in the woman's womb and the birth of the child (Blacking 1982, p. 493). In addition to these observations, Levine has remarked that *domba* dance "simulates the movements of a baby in the womb" (Levine 2005, p. 197). He further observed that the formation of the *domba* dance resembles a python, which is a symbol of fertility. Magubane made the same observations – those of a *domba* dance as a beautiful python dance of the VhaVenda (Magubane 2005, p. 79). Huskisson made similar remarks about the Pedi girls' puberty ritual dance – that it involves crouching actions that "suggest the development of the unborn child in the womb" (Huskisson 1958, pp. 198–199). While the studies of the latter four researchers allude to childbearing by women, my study focuses on gender identity, women's identity in particular.

METHODOLOGY

Ethnography undertaken from a feminist perspective is one of the approaches utilised for the research reported in this essay. Reinharz, (1992, p. 51, quoted by Sarantakos 2002, p. 199) argues that feminist ethnographic research "aims at (1) documenting the lives and activities of women, (2) understanding the experience of women from their own point of view, and (3) conceptualising women's behaviour as an expression of social contexts". She adds that "the characteristic element in feminist research is familiarity with the subject, closeness to the respondents, and quality and type of relationship between researcher and the researched must be equalitarian and referenced to the large socio-cultural system of the explaining source" (*ibid.*, p. 200).

The researcher and his wife attended an *intonjane* ceremony for women that went on for three days at the Tshemese location near the city of Mthatha in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa. The researcher interviewed women and girls and he observed as instructions were given to the initiate, as well as the sacrifices conducted on her behalf.

The researcher and his wife also took part in the event as food was distributed according to wards, clans, seniority, and gender. The author was also invited into the kraal to witness the slaughtering of the first domestic animal, a goat, for the initiate. He also witnessed the removal of the first piece of meat to be roasted for the initiate.

Ethnomethodology has been another approach employed in documenting the research reported in this essay. According to Payne (1981, p. 117), ethnomethodology refers to the way “people assembled order in social affairs through the systematic use of methods which were equally available to them to produce actions of their own”. Neuman (2003, p. 534) defines ethnomethodology as “the study (of) ordinary social interaction in small-scale settings to reveal the rules that people use to construct and maintain their everyday social reality”. Sarantakos (2002, p. 463), and Babbie and Mouton (2001, p. 642) have made similar comments on ethnomethodology. Punch (2001, pp. 184–185) has observed that

many ethnomethodologists favour observational techniques over interview and self-report data. Observation includes listening, looking, and everyday face-to-face interaction depending heavily on both verbal and visual behaviour. Therefore, alongside observation, some contemporary ethnomethodologists have directed much of their attention to conversation analysis, since they see language as the fundamental base of communication.

The author also contributed donations that were asked from other members of the family to feed the community that came to the *intonjane* ceremony. These were donations like homemade bread, sugar, coffee, milk, and brandy. From then onwards he was treated as a member of the family rather than as a researcher, and was called by his clan name. This made it easier to gather information. At one point the researcher and his wife were also invited into the house for lunch and they shared a lot of information on *intonjane* with a number of women who had also been through it. He also observed that people talk freely and reveal more information in discussions than in arranged interviews.

The researcher carried an audiotape recorder, which also had video facilities, which he used to record the music of the performances. At some point the researcher would stop interviewing and record discussions between his wife and members of the community about the *intonjane* without warning them. By so doing, he was collecting material which otherwise he would have missed if he had alerted them to the recording. The researcher found this technique fruitful, although some ethnographers feel it is wrong to record a discussion without the permission of the people involved.

Accordingly, the researcher has employed a qualitative approach in his research through fieldwork and case study, which is characterised by data collection including interviews, observation, sampling, documentary sources, sampling, and analysis at a field site. The author documented stories behind certain songs and observed that the meaning of these songs was found in the context in which they were performed. Neuman (2003, p. 38), and Sarantakos (2002, p. 105) have commented that qualitative research may involve field research, case studies, participant observation, interviews, documentation, and data collection.

THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Musical identity, in the context of this essay, reflects female gender and resistance identity. Gracyk (2004, p. 2) has alluded to music in identities paradigm, that is, developing identities through music especially where music contributes in the articulation of gender. Bowman has indicated that “musical identities are always also about who, through musical doings of all sorts (...) we are, and about whom we are in the process of becoming”. He further states that music will “shape or alter both who and how we are—as evolving social and moral beings” (Bowman 2005, pp. 6, 7).

Resistance identity is reflected through the wording of the lyrics, which are sometimes expressed in a subtle manner. Castells has remarked that the “social construction of identity always takes place in a context marked by power relationships and leads to other forms of identity, such as resistance identity” (Castells 2002, pp. 7–8). Resistance can also be the “ability to remain unaffected by the problem” (Collins Dictionary 1988, p. 1233). This can be done through the medium of a song, which is used as a device to release the stress of, or to absorb, the problems of social life. Calhoun (quoted in Castells 2002, p. 8) has remarked that resistance identity is “generated by those actors that are in positions/conditions devalued and/or stigmatised by the logic of domination, thus building trenches of resistance and survival on the basis of principles different from, or opposed to, those permeating the institutions of society”. Resistance identity has been considered as a perspective that “constructs forms of collective resistance against otherwise unbearable opposition” (Castells 2002, p. 9).

Lastly, the author has adopted Farrant’s definition of education, namely a total human learning by which knowledge is imparted through a process in which “a society reproduces itself [by] passing on its main characteristics to the next generation” (Farrant, 1991, pp. 18–19).

GENDER IDENTITY IN *INTONJANE* MUSIC

Intonjane music is about women in the rural areas and their experiences in life expressed in certain texts, songs, and attires. As women they are custodians of *intonjane*, the women's puberty rite. The *umnqungqo* dance is performed during *intonjane* celebrations and "is exclusive to women because the whole affair of *ukuthombisa* (female initiation) is a women's business (*yindaba yabafazi*)" (Hansen 1981, p. 533). Hunter (1961, p. 165) corroborates thus: "initiation is still an important factor in the life of girls. After puberty and before marriage a girl should be *ukuthombisa*' (go into seclusion). The word *intonjane* is derived from *ukuthomba*, which means "to put forth shoots; to sprout, bud; of a girl, to menstruate for the first time" (Kropf 1915, p. 418). *Ukuthombisa* "is the causative form, and means the performance of the initiation rites" (Hunter 1961, p. 166). During *intonjane* celebrations women are practically given all the meat, as *intonjane* is the women's affair (Laubscher 1938, p. 148). Lastly, *intonjane* performance is associated with health, fertility, and sterility of women (Soga 1931, p. 216; Soga 1979, p. 61).

The first event that reflects gender identity in *intonjane* performance is the ululation called *Ukuhayaza, Yi-ye-e-e! Yi-ye-e-e! Yi-ye-e-e!* performed exclusively by the women. It is different from ululation that is performed when boys attain manhood. It is rendered with a feeling of derision, and is accompanied by the chanting of a provocative slogan, "*ayithombang' ithunukele*" (she is not an initiate, but just hurt; "hurt" meaning "anxious" in this case) as a constant reminder to the prospective initiate that the initiation day has arrived when the girl will be placed in seclusion. "*Ayithombang' ithunukele*" is an initiation slogan for girls and is performed by women during *intonjane* initiation to poke fun at her. The constant repetition of the slogan is designed to irritate the prospective initiate.

For a full description of the *intonjane* ceremony with its rituals and sacrifices, see Laubscher 1975, and Hunter 1961. The researcher has indicated that he and his wife attended an *intonjane* ceremony. It was on March 25, 2005. The visited ceremony was held at the home of the Mangolwane clan at the Tshemese location, in a peri-village.² As we approached Mangolwane's kraal we were welcomed by a lone woman's voice performing the ululation called *Ukuhayaza, Yi-ye-e-e! Yi-ye-e-e! Yi-ye-e-e!*. The tone of the performance had a feeling of derision. She was also chanting a provocative slogan to

² A peri-village is a ward in the rural area where people have built urban buildings and live an urban life, but still practise all the customs that are performed in the rural areas.

the pubescent girl, *ayithombang' thunukele!*. There was also a group of women who were performing *umtsholozo*³ in front of the *intonjane* lodge known as *ilidwe*.

The performance of the *ukuhayaza* ululation, *Yi-e-e-e! Yi-e-e-e! Yi-e-e-e!* and the chanting of the *ayithombang' ithunukele* slogan by one woman is a dominating feature on the first day of the initiation. One informant claimed that the slogan is meant to “frighten” the prospective initiate. Another informant said the slogan did not frighten her at all. Fright in this context refers to the fear of the unknown similar to anxiety that is experienced by some pupils before examinations. According to my informants, the ululation *Yi-ye-e-e! Yi-ye-e-e! Yi-ye-e-e!* that accompanies the *Nongabelo* song demonstrates satire and sarcasm, which is intended to mock, cause anxiety and infuriate the prospective initiate. This is indicated by the slow tempo of ululation that is characterised by an outburst of emotional excitement and sudden spasmodic motion. The slogan “*ayithombang' ithunukele*” is intended to ridicule the prospective initiate. One informant said part of the anxiety is because the prospective initiate wants to know what will happen where she will sit for the rest of the initiation, behind the grass mat stretched across the back of *ilidwe*. Perhaps she is afraid that she will die, because the same practice of placing the body of a deceased person behind the grass mat is performed in the rural areas.

The second incident that marked gender identity was the performance of the *Nongabelo* song that signifies the arrival of the initiate from the mountain to her initiation institution. One informant of Centuli location reported that *Nongabelo* is a song that sends the initiate into seclusion. Another informer, also of Centuli location, maintained that it is rather an invitation to the ancestors to bless the performance of the *intonjane* rite. Broster (1967, p.133) has made a similar comment on boys' initiation song, *Somagwaza*, in relation to ancestors. *Somagwaza* is a traditional song that is sung by men during the circumcision ceremony of amaXhosa boys. She refers to this song as being “praise to the ancestral Spirits (... with a) hymn-like tune”.

On the day of the *intonjane* ceremony, at dusk (about 7.30 pm), the initiate went to the mountains accompanied by a chaperon – who is her paternal aunt – and by other women who have gone through the initiation process. I should indicate that “going to the mountains” is just an expression. It means going just outside the gates of the homestead so that the girl comes back as an initiate called *intonjane*, leaning on the back of her aunt and draped in a blanket. The initiate is then led straight to her initiation lodge, which has a dim light. One informant from Tshemese location claimed that in the past girls actually went to the mountains for the performance of certain rituals.

³ This is music performed at the household of *intonjane* anytime during the initiation period.

Laubscher (1938, p. 148) has also alluded to this. When the initiate comes back from the mountain, she is then addressed as *intonjane* until she comes out of the initiation lodge. As the initiate and other women are entering the gate from the mountains to the initiation hut, they perform the *Nongabelo* song (see Appendix 1, Example 1, for the lyrics of the *Nongabelo* song).

Just as men sing the *Somagwaza* song during the circumcision ceremony for the boys, women sing the *Nongabelo* song when a girl is going into seclusion. *Nongabelo* for women plays the same role that *Somagwaza* plays for men – it is a form of identity formation. When *Nongabelo* is performed, everybody knows that *intonjane* has just gone into seclusion just as they understand the performance of *Somagwaza* by men—that is, there is a boy (or boys) who is about to become an initiate. One participant reported that *Somagwaza* represents the boy when he leaves the kraal to attain manhood and *Nongabelo* represents the girl when she goes into seclusion.

The melancholic tone of *Nongabelo* song (Example 1) indicates that an important event has just occurred – that is, the girl has become an initiate. This is reflected by the gloomy colour and the slow tempo of the music. The mood of the music is elegiac and has an appealing quality, as the song is an invitation to the ancestors to bless the occasion. The combination of the slow tempo, vocalisation that is characterised by frequent application of depressor consonants and the gloomy colour are designed to create anxiety for the initiate as she imagines her experiences in the initiation school. The phrase *silele sizokwamkela* (We have slept over to welcome you) – meaning we have set aside all other commitments just to be with you this day – in bars number six and seven is another indication of how important this event is to women. Lastly, the phrase *yathomb' intonjane yazingqungqela* ("has a girl ever performed in her own initiation ceremony?") shows that *intonjane* is a women's ceremony.

Intonjane stays in the lodge with her chaperon called *idindala*, *inkazana*, or *ikhankatha*, and with a younger girl who is responsible for her meals. From now on, there is continuous random singing expressing happiness by women in the morning and again in the afternoon – this is called *ukutsholoza*. In the evening the women continue with *umtsholozo* performances just outside the *intonjane* lodge after the initiate has been brought into *ilidwe*. They sing a few songs in a circle in order to appeal to the host's kindness to bring beer to the centre of the circle for performers to drink. In the African traditional way of life it is considered unethical on occasions such as *intonjane* to demand African beer from the host, so participants wait until it is offered to them. However, there are other means – such as performing *umtsholozo* – which participants use to solicit more beer from the host.

A basis for imparting knowledge to the young girls is going through the initiation. Regarding moral and sex education, the researcher observed that education in *intonjane* is experiential, and conducted through observations, commands and/or instructions, advice and exhortations. One informant of Mqanduli district believed that the rite inculcates “responsibilities for the young girl – that is, how to behave as a teenage girl, (with) self-control, discipline, and perseverance if one wants to make it in life; and that there are rules in life that one must observe”. Laubscher (1938, p. 151) has alluded on this regarding the *intonjane* rite.

On her “coming out” the girl is brought before her grandmother, aunts, relatives and other women and she is told that she should behave herself, in other words, there should be no premarital sexual intercourse. She is a grown up who should be able to distinguish between wrong and right. Hence “you must not be foolish from now on. Great expenses have been made to put you through the ceremony and from today you must learn to think for yourself. You must respect the laws and you must remain chaste until your marriage”.

RESISTANCE IDENTITY IN *INTONJANE* MUSIC

Headmen in the rural areas are leaders of the communities and have been invested with certain powers to administer certain duties. These duties include giving permission for the chopping of wood in the forest for use on an occasion such as *intonjane*. Other duties are to give permission to women to perform puberty rite ceremonies for their daughters. Some headmen ask women to perform duties that involve domestic chores such as brewing of beer before the performance of the rites. Many women loathe such pre-initiation obligations and consider them as nothing more than abuse by men. Other women defy such instructions and perform the *intonjane* ceremony without permission from the community leader or headman.

The song *Zadan’ izibonda* (Headmen are disappointed, see Example 2) is an expression of defiance by women as they register disapproval of the actions of the headmen to women. The phrase *mna ndoyik’ izibonda* (I am afraid of headmen) dominates the song to express the disgust and objections to abuse by the headmen felt by the women. The music was performed in a melancholic mode and with a sombre tone reflected by the tempo of 69 to 72-crotch beat per minute and a mode in which the music is performed. This was a typical song that reflected resistance identity. In this song women showed solidarity in their support of their colleague to resist the abuses of power by headmen. Hence the *zadan’izibonda* phrase which displays unwillingness to do domestic chores required by the headmen before the performance of *intonjane* rites.

One participant explained that, in the song *Mas'y'eGol'* (Let us go to Johannesburg, Example 3) rural women ask their husbands to go and work in Johannesburg to earn money for their (the women's) domestic expenses. They do this by playing on the guilt of men by offering to go to Johannesburg themselves and work if their husbands cannot. This is a shrewd appeal to the men's conscience and is a typical tactic of women in the real world. Women also dislike conducting the *intonjane* rite alone, while their husbands are working in Johannesburg. Going to Johannesburg by women is an act of disapproval about being left alone by their husbands.

One informant remarked that "we are also asking other women to join us on our way to Johannesburg to bring back our husbands, as we are not allowed to stay there". Here the informant was referring to South Africa's special apartheid legislation that outlawed women from staying with their husbands at their working place. The Section 10 rights clause for influx control under the Black (Urban Areas) Consolidation Act of 1945 "specified criteria for urban residence. Individuals who qualified for urban residence thus have (...) Section 10 rights" (quoted in Wilmot 1987, p. 89). Under this section rural workers had to "get authorisation to be in a city beyond a seventy-two-hour period; they had to get work, and they had to get housing" (*ibid.* pp. 82–83). Farm workers are not included in the Section and cannot work in the cities. When they (farm workers) retired or lost their jobs, they had to go back to the Bantustans (homelands) (Mermelstein 1987, p. 120).

The music expresses disapproval of the social conditions that women are subjected to in the rural areas – performing all domestic duties without their husbands (who are probably working in the mines where women are not allowed to visit). Finnegan has mentioned this, noting that topical songs are "a way of expressing often indirectly or in a limited and conventional manner, what could not be said directly, or through a different medium, or on just any occasion" (Finnegan 1995, pp. 283–284). In the song *Masiy'eGoli* the music opens with a hysterical sigh that is often repeated throughout the song to express extreme frustration. The sigh is followed by a cry of protest by a woman who is playing a man's role, while her husband is working in Johannesburg. This is indicated by the phrase "*yile ndod' ayam' iseGoli ndayisebenzela*" ("it is this man who stays in Johannesburg that I am working for at home"). The tempo of the music is very slow – a 50 crotchet beat per minute. The music is characterised by a feeling of despondency reflected by a recurring phrase *Hoh lah lah lah*, from *abakhwazeli* (accompanying voices). The words *latshon' ilanga* (the sun is setting) means "what are they waiting for?" The mood of the music also suggests that these women miss their husbands. The music reflects a feeling of forlornness, loneliness, hopelessness, and desperation. Hansen (1981,

p. 560) has observed that in *umngqungqo* songs “there are allusions to missing husbands (...) and to a disturbed frame of mind”.

Blacking (cited in Chernoff 1986, p. 194) has observed that music is “an expression of human experience in social life”. Performing arts at *intonjane* ceremony enable women in the rural areas to communicate through the medium of a song or slogan to express their experiences in social life. These experiences may be expressed in short phrases and one needs to know the story behind a song in order to understand its meaning. Dance, that is, *umngqungqo* that is performed at *intonjane* ceremony, like music, is rendered exclusively by women as indicated in Figure 1. Attire, especially waist beads, is also exclusively a female outfit that is intended to bring colour to the performance.

Women use *intonjane* music to express feelings not otherwise expressible due to cultural constraints. Darrow (2004, p. 24) has observed that “music enhances verbal and nonverbal social interaction and communication: (as) it is easier to talk with music in the background. Clients may express in music or through music preference feelings not otherwise expressible”. *Intonjane/umngqungqo* music is also therapeutic. While the music provides an avenue for expressing negative feelings, hence resistance music, it also assists in restoring psychological and emotional health (Darrow 2004, p. 18). Music therapy is the “art of using music in incriminatory moments of life with the aim of healing or ameliorating/recovering persons in need” (Piel 2001, p. 381, cited in Laufer 2004, p. 64). Hansen (1981, p. 562) has observed that *umngqungqo* music provides communal performance that has the maximum effect on people.

INTRICACIES OF THE LYRICS

Intonjane or *umngqungqo* music is polyphonic, characterised by out of the ordinary “off beat” entrances. LeRoi Jones (cited in Chernoff 1986, p. 47) refers to the use of “staggered independent entrances” in African music. *Umngqungqo* music is the only genre of the *amaXhosa* characterised by a simultaneous combination of melodies with peculiar entrances. All three examples of *umngqungqo* or *intonjane* music mentioned above are polyphonic and characterised by different entrances at the appropriate intervals.

Secondly, the more the song is repeated, the more the texture thickens as voices are added with different entries. Example 3 starts with two voices but ends with five voices. Front phrasing and back phrasing, a technique that makes it difficult for one to establish the pulse, dominate the music. Thirdly, the music is articulated in fragmented phrases so that, if one does not understand the language, one may think that the words have no meaning. Hunter (1961, p. 169) claims that phrases in *umngqungqo* music “are just

words” which had some “significance when they were first sung, but afterwards when used in other contexts have no meaning”. Hansen has made a similar point (1981, p. 562) and claims that *umngqungqo* performance “seemed to be a big mass of sound”.

Lastly, it is common to hear different and apparently unrelated phrases in *umngqungqo* music, as this is one of the forms of improvisation employed. One informant commented “*uNokhula xa ehlabela ingoma uthi eyiqala nje abe eyicabela kangangokuba ndivele ndingayazi nokuba yiyiphi*” (“when the lead vocalist starts a song, she begins with an improvisation so that I am unable to recognise which song she is singing”). Hansen (1981, p. 552) has remarked that *umngqungqo* songs are “largely improvised, singers selecting from a store of words and phrases which are standard for this category of music”.

It may well be that the art of combining unrelated phrases and the skill of entering at different intervals in a song owe their origins to the natural talent that African women have when engaged in such a discussion. They have a natural ability and skill to raise a number of issues in the same discussion, which they give voice to at different intervals or “entrances” without disrupting the discussion and without waiting for the colleague to finish her say. Their discussion is characterised by interjections between speeches.

UMNGQUNGQO AND ATTIRE AS DECISIVE IDENTITY INDICATORS

(a) *Umngqungqo*

Umngqungqo dance is the most important marker of identity at the *intonjane* ceremony. It is the only form of Cape Nguni communal music, which is both sung and danced by persons of the same sex, namely women (Hansen 1981, p. 533). Hunter (1936, p. 167) has also remarked that *umngqungqo* of the *amaMpondo* is performed by women of the same age-set who are known as *amazibazana* (mothers of the initiates), women initiates in this case. Mertens and Broster (1987, p. 137) have commented that “the dance for the women is known as the *umngqungqo* dance and is always performed at the initiation of a girl into womanhood”. Soga (1931, p. 218) concurs: “shortly after the girl has begun her seclusion period, women collect from far and near for the *umngqungqo* or women’s dance. No men take part in this dance”.

When performing the *umngqungqo* dance, women always stand with their backs to the audience and carry a stick or *sjambok* in one hand. This is because the focus is on graceful back movement, as Xhosa women do not lift their legs too high when dancing in *umngqungqo* style. The dance is characterised by a slow tempo and a graceful rhythm. *Umngqungqo* dancing dominates at the *intonjane* ceremony and many people attend the function only to watch this part of the performance. Hansen (1981, p. 89) has remarked

on this: “because the performance of the dance dominates the occasion, people tend to refer to the event in terms of its most important music”. The women dance in a circular motion and anti-clockwise. The reason for the former is that they can easily see one another; whereas the argument for the latter is that it is easier to move anti-clockwise when dancing than in the opposite direction. Footwork movement is independent of the rhythm of the music. Figure 1 illustrates women performing at an *intonjane* celebration.



Figure 1

(b) Attire

Around their necks women wear more or less the same beads that men wear, except that some face a different direction. These include *vula kabini*, a long beaded outfit decorated in different colours that runs on either side of the neck of a woman and down the shoulders until it reaches the legs at the back, while the same bead outfit runs down the front side until it reaches the legs. An informant of Centuli has commented that dancing women hang the *vula kabini* outfit on their backs so that it may be admired by the audience – in keeping with the tradition that women always dance with their backs to the audience.

On their waist women also wear different types of outfits – often being stacked in four layers and denoting different roles. Figures 2 and 3 shows the examples of the waist outfits.



Figure 2



Figure 3

These costumes include *unomdlenge*, which can be seen at the bottom in Figure 3 and it was worn to show respect to the parents-in-law. In the tradition it is a cultural requirement in many societies for women to cover their backs with something, even if they are performing. Immediately above the *unomdlenge* outfit is the *nongcoiyana*, second from the bottom of Figure 3, which was decorated with deep pink embroidery at the top, called *amanquma*, and which acts as “the cherry on the top” as the various outfits are dominated by the same colours. One informant commented that *amanquma* enable the whole costume to “come out” clearly and provide contrast; *unongcoiyana* has three extensions called *imidywisha kanongcoiyana* and is embellished with *amanquma* at the bottom.

The other outfit that was worn around the waist by women only is *umsubhe*, third from the bottom of Figure 3. This is worn solely for decorative purposes and is made up of five thick and loose multicoloured rows that are combined together on either side of the waist and placed above the *unongcoiyana*. A lady from Centuli described how, at the

top, just above *umsubhe*, there was the *itema lokuvala* that completed the outfit (see Figure 3). *Itema* also serves as an extension of the *unomdlenge* outfit to cover the area around the waist. Women also covered their breasts with an *incebeta* wrap, made out of a cloth called *intente* that ran down until it reached the knees in front. It was decorated with two extensions, which were knotted at the end and ran down until they reached the legs at the back. Figures 4 shows the examples of *incebeta*.



Figure 4

There are also arm bangles worn by women only called *imiqhoboka*, which are put on the arms to add colour. Figure 5 is an example of *imiqhoboka*.



Figure 5

Underneath the beads is another stack of three outfits. These include long skirts made out of the black sheepskin, which are worn at the *intonjane* ceremony, although these are no longer common. Broster (1987, p. 153) has described the sheepskin attire. Figure 1 illustrates skirts that are common nowadays at *intonjane* ceremonies because the sheepskin skirts are not readily available. Above the long skirt is a short skirt called *is'besho* that is also intended to extend the lining of the long skirt called *inazini*. On top of *is'besho* is a towel called *umheshuzo*, which is also worn to create some contrast as these articles come in different colours; *umheshuzo* may be like an apron or a white cloth called *ikeloko*.

These attires are important identity markers, as a brilliantly coloured outfit enables the dancing women to be the centre of attraction. Dancers also claim that the attire “adds life” in contrast to the performance that involves very little but still graceful action. Such attire enables the participants at the ceremony to create a sense of dignity, reverence, respect and appreciation of the *umngqungqo* dance. It is also easy to identify women of different ethnic groups by their attire. *AmaXhosa* normally perform in white garb; *amaMpondo*, *AmaMpondomise* and *AmaXesibe* in light blue; and *AbaThembu* and *AmaBomvana* usually like the red ochre colour.

(c) Other bead outfits common to men and women

The following are different types of outfits that women wear at *intonjane* ceremonies:

At the top of the outfit is the headgear called *isikhova* that is prepared in different shapes depending on the ethnic group that the dancer associates with. *AmaXhosa* people have their own style and so too for the *AbaThembu*, *AmaMpondo* and *AmaMpondomise*.

Vula kabini is crafted in different colours and each colour has a different meaning. According to a person at the Mthatha museum, the *vula kabini* costume that is made up of navy and white colours is worn by elderly people, although nowadays boys also wear it. The *vula kabini* necklace that is dominated by the white beads is for middle-aged people. Sometimes it is worn on an occasion that involves the ancestors. For instance, if someone has dreamed several times about the deceased asking for food or a blanket, a ritual ceremony proper to the occasion is organised on his/her or their behalf and old men of the homestead wear *vula kabini* that is dominated by white colour as the white colour is also associated with the ancestors. The *vula kabini* that is designed in yellow or green colours is given to newly wed couples. The yellow colour is for fertility and the green is for new life and wealth. Figure 6 illustrates the different types of *vula kabini* outfits.⁴

⁴ The author wishes to thank Mthatha Museum for the photographs of the different types of *vula kabini* costume.



Figure 6

Women also wear *ithumbu and unobaxa* (necklace-like outfits) around their necks and these are illustrated in Figures 7 and 8 below. In the past only elderly people wore *ithumbu and unobaxa*. However, more recently I have seen boys and girls wearing these costumes, perhaps due to ignorance or lack of other costume.



Figure 7

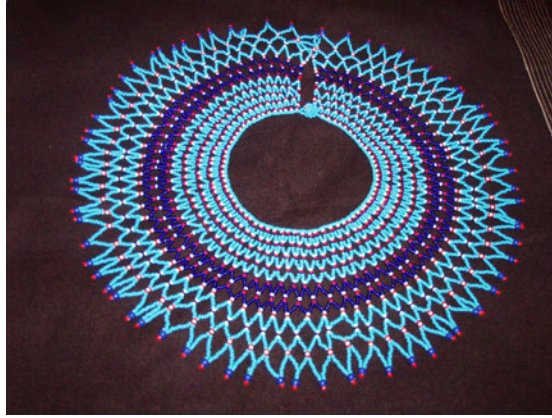


Figure 8

REFERENCES

- Babbie, E. & Mouton, J. 2001. *The practice of social research*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Blacking, J. 1982. Indigenous musics of South Africa. In J.P. Malan (ed.): *South African Music Encyclopedia*, Volume II. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.
- Bowman, W. 2005. The song is you: Symposium on musical identity. In A. Regelski (ed.): *Action, criticism & theory for music education: The ACT Journal*.
<http://www.siu.edu/MUSICPAPERS/v3/BowmanIntro04.htm>. [Date of access: 20 Sept 2007].
- Broster, J. 1967. *Red Blanket Valley*. Johannesburg: Hugh Keartland Publishers.
- Broster, J. 1987. *African elegance*. Cape Town: Struik Publishers.
- Castells, M. 2002. *The power of identity*. Berlin: Blackwell Publishing Ltd.
- Chernoff, J. M. 1986. *African rhythm and African sensibility*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Collins English Dictionary, 1988.
- Dargie, D. 1988. Xhosa music. Its techniques and instruments, with a collection of songs. Claremont: David Philip.
- Darrow, A-A. 2004. The musical intersection of therapy, medicine, and special education. In M. Prause-Weber (ed.): *Proceedings of the ISME Commission Seminar on Music in Special Education, Music Therapy, and Music Medicine*. Victoria/Spain.
- Farrant, J.S. 1991. *Principles and practice of education*. London: Longman.
- Finnegan, R. 1995. *Oral literature in Africa*. Nairobi: Oxford University Press.
- Gracyk, T. 2004. Does everyone have a musical identity? Reflections on music identities. In A. Regelski (ed): *Action, criticism, & theory for music education. The ACT Journal*, 3 (1).
<http://www.siu.edu/MUSIC/ACTPAPERS/v3/Gracyk04.htm>. [Date of access: 21 Sept 2007].
- Hansen, D. D. 1981. *The music of the Xhosa-speaking people*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand.

- Hunter, M. 1961. *Reaction to conquest: Effects of contact with Europeans on the Pondo of South Africa*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Huskisson, Y. 1958. The social and ceremonial music of the Pedi. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of the Witwatersrand.
- Kropf, D.D. 1915. *Kaffir-English dictionary*. 2nd edition. Alice: Lovedale Press.
- Laubscher, B.J.F. 1938. *Sex, Custom and Psychopathology: A Study of South African Pagan Natives*. New York: Robert M. McBride & Co.
- Laubscher, B.J.F. 1975. *The pagan soul*. Cape Town: Howard Timmins.
- Laufer, D. 2004. Aesthetical and ethical implications for music education and music therapy. In M. Prause-Weber (ed): *Proceedings of the ISME Commission Seminar on Music in Special Education, Music Therapy, and Music Medicine*. Victoria/Spain
- Levine, L. 2005. *Traditional music of South Africa*. Johannesburg: Jacana Media.
- Magubane, P. 2005. Rites of passage. In A. Horler (ed.): *Mercedes*, February issue. Cape Town: New Media Publishing.
- Mermelstein D. 1987. *The anti-apartheid reader*. New York: Grove Press.
- Mertens, A. & Broster, J. 1987. *African elegance*. Cape Town: Struik Publishers.
- Neuman, W.L. 2003. *Social research methods (Fifth Edition)*. Boston: Library of Congress.
- Payne, G. 1981. *Sociology and social research*. London: Routledge Kegan Paul
- Punch, K. F. 2001. *Introduction to social research: Quantitative and qualitative approaches*. London: Sage Publications.
- Rycroft, D. K. 1964. *The Zulu Ballad of Nomagundwane*. *African Language Studies*, 16, pp. 61–92.
- Sarantakos, S. 2002. *Social research*. South Yarra: Macmillan Australia,
- Soga, J.H. 1931. *The Ama-Xhosa: Life and customs*. Alice: Lovedale Press.
- Soga, T.B. 1979. *Intlalo ka-Xhosa*. Alice: Lovedale Press.
- Wilmot, G. J. (ed.) 1987. *The state of apartheid*. Boulder, Colorado: Lynne Reinner Publishers.

Nongabelo

H.P. = Hlabela Phambili (Leading Voice)
A = Abakhwazeli (Accompanying Voices)

A = Abakhwazeli (Accompanying voices)

EXAMPLE 1

A section

$\text{♩} = 108-112$

Nongabelo Hah Yoh Hoh
Hoh! Yoh
Hah Yoh wch Hoh Uh Hoh
Hoh! Yoh
Sile le si zo kwamkela
Nongabelo Hah Yoh Hoh
Hah Yoh hoh
Yoh! Hoh! — Hah! Yoh hoh
Nongabelo Hah! Yoh Hoh Yathomb'intonjana yazi ngungqela
Hah Yoh hoh — Hah Yoh Hoh Hah Yoh Hoh Hah Yoh Hoh
Nongabelo Hah Yoh Hoh
Huh Yoh Hoh! Yoh! Hah Yoh Hoh
B section
Iyho Hoh Haye Hay' Hoh Ih Hoh Haye Haye Hay! Hoh lingathe ngapha
Hoh ch Hoh
A section
Hoh! Sihlanu nga pha Nongabelo Hah Yoh Hoh
Hah Ah Hoh Ah Hoh! Hah Hoh Yoh!

PAN-A4 12 STAVE

Example 1 Continues

3/4

Handwritten musical score for five voices (Soprano, Alto 1, Alto 2, Alto 3, Bass) in 3/4 time. The score continues from Example 1, showing measures 31, 32, and 33. The lyrics are in Xhosa: Nongabelo, Hah Yoh Hoh, Hoh Yoh Hoh, Hoh Yoh, Hoh Hoh Ih Hoh, Hoh Hoh, Hoh, Hoh, and Hah Yoh hoh.

Measures 31, 32, and 33 are indicated above the staves.

Lyrics for Soprano (S):
 31: Nongabelo
 32: Hah Yoh Hoh
 33: (rest)

Lyrics for Alto 1 (A1):
 31: Hah Yoh Hoh
 32: Hoh Yoh
 33: (rest)

Lyrics for Alto 2 (A2):
 31: (rest)
 32: Hoh Hoh Ih Hoh
 33: (rest)

Lyrics for Alto 3 (A3):
 31: (rest)
 32: Hoh Hoh
 33: (rest)

Lyrics for Bass (B):
 31: (rest)
 32: Hoh
 33: Hah Yoh hoh

Zadan'izibonda

Example 2

L.V. = Leading Voice (Hlabela Phambili = H.P.)
A.Vs. = Accompanying Voices (Abakhwazeli = A.)

♩ = 69-72

Handwritten musical score for "Zadan'izibonda". The score is written for a Leading Voice (H.P.) and Accompanying Voices (A.). The tempo is marked as ♩ = 69-72. The score consists of 20 measures, numbered 1 through 20. The lyrics are in Zulu and include "Hoh!", "Heh!", "Hah!", "mama", "hala", "mama", "Ha la", "la la", "Uh! thekayapha kubi", "Ha la", "kuba ndoyik'izi - bonda", "u! thaphin'ama - ngxongo", "Hoh!", "Hah! hah!", "Uh! thekayapha kubi", "Ha la-la thuthuze lum - twana", and "Hoh! Heh! Hah!". The score is written in 2/4 time and features various musical notations including notes, rests, and accidentals.

Example 2 continues

Handwritten musical score for Example 2, continuing from the previous page. The score is written for four systems of staves, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are in Sesotho. The score includes various musical notations such as treble clefs, key signatures (one sharp), time signatures (4/4), and dynamic markings (f, p). It also includes performance instructions like 'Hoh!', 'Ha la la', and 'Hay' zadan'izi'.

System 1 (Measures 21-24):

- Vocal 1:** Hoh! - Ha la la Hoh! - Hah! hah!
- Vocal 2:** Hoh! - Hoh! Hoh! Hah! Hoh! Heh! Hah!
- Vocal 3:** Hoh! - Hoh! Ha la - la Hoh! Hah!
- Vocal 4:** Hoh! - Hoh! Hoh! Hah!

System 2 (Measures 25-28):

- Vocal 1:** Uh! thekayapha Kubi Ha la - la thuthu ze lum twana
- Vocal 2:** Hoh! - Hoh! Hoh! Hah! Hoh! Heh! Hah!
- Vocal 3:** Hoh! Hoh!
- Vocal 4:** Hoh! Hoh!

System 3 (Measures 29-32):

- Vocal 1:** Uh! thekayapha kubi Hala la thuthu ze lum twana
- Vocal 2:** Hoh! Hoh!
- Vocal 3:** Hoh! Hoh!
- Vocal 4:** Hoh! Hoh!

System 4 (Measures 33-36):

- Vocal 1:** Hay' zadan'izi - bonda
- Vocal 2:** Hoh! Hoh!
- Vocal 3:** Hoh! Hoh!
- Vocal 4:** Hoh! Hoh!

Example 2 continues

Handwritten musical score for a choir, featuring vocal parts (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. The score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The lyrics are in Xhosa. The score is divided into systems, with measures numbered 33 through 48. The lyrics are:
 Ah! thethi! aMa ngxongo Heh! mama Hala mama
 Hoh! — Hah Hoh! Hah — Hoh! Heh! Hah!
 Uthe khayapha Ku bi Hay' zadan' i zi bo — nda
 Ah! the thi! aMa ngxongo Heh! mnando yik'izi bonda
 Hoh — Heh! Hoh! Hoh!
 Hoh! — Hoh! Hala - la Hoh! Heh! Hah!
 Uthe khayapha Ku bi
 Uthe khayapha Kubi Hala - la thuthuzel'um twa na
 Hoh! — Hoh! Hah!
 Hoh! — Hoh! Hah!
 Ndali — la Hay' wadan' uta — ta Hoh! Hah!

Masiye Goli

H.P = Habela Phambili (Leading Voice)
A = Abakhwazeli (Accompanying Voices)

Example 3

$\text{♩} = 50$

1. Iyuh... mama yenzek'into Iyuh... 2. Ma-siye

3. Iyuh... 4. yile ndod'am'ise Goli

5. Gol' Hah lah lah lah lah 6. latsho la zola 7. Hoh! Hah lah lah lah

8. yile ndod'am' - ise Goli nday'sebenzela

9. Ma-siye 10. Gol' Hah lah lah lah 11. latshon'i langa

12. Hah! 13. Ah! Hah!

14. Hoh Hah lah lah lah 15. Ma-siye 16. Gol' Hah lah lah lah

17. Hoh Hah Hoh 18. Hah lah lah lah

19. Ah! Hah! 20. latshon'i langa Hoh! Hah lah lah lah Masiye Gol' Hah lah

Hoh Hah lah lah lah Masiye Gol' Hah! lah!

PAN-A4 12 STAVE

Example 3 Continues

The musical score is written for four staves: HP (Hand Piano), A1 (Alto 1), A2 (Alto 2), and A3 (Alto 3). The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are in Sesotho.

Measures 21-24:

- HP:** 21: lah lah; 22: yilendod'am'ise Goli; 23: nday' Sebenzela; 24: (rest)
- A1:** 21: lah lah; 22: latshola zola; 23: Hoh' hah lah lah lah; 24: Masiye
- A2:** 21: lah lah; 22: Hoh' hah' Hoh' heh; 23: Hoh' Hah lah lah lah; 24: Uthisiye
- A3:** 21: (rest); 22: (rest); 23: (rest); 24: (rest)

Measures 25-28:

- HP:** 25: yilendod'am'ise Goli; 26: nday' Sebenzela; 27: (rest); 28: Ah' ah!
- A1:** 25: Goli' Hah lah lah lah; 26: (rest); 27: (rest); 28: Oh' Hah lah lah lah
- A2:** 25: Goli' Hah lah lah lah; 26: (rest); 27: Oh Hoh Hay' He; 28: Oh' Hah lah lah lah
- A3:** 25: E Goli' Hah lah lah lah; 26: (rest); 27: (rest); 28: (rest)

Measures 29-32:

- HP:** 29: (rest); 30: Ah-ah Hh; 31: (rest); 32: (rest)
- A1:** 29: ndod'am'ise Goli' Haya ndila; 30: ndila la nga; 31: (rest); 32: Satshokammandi
- A2:** 29: ndod'am'ise - Goli' Haya ndila; 30: ndila la nga; 31: (rest); 32: Hoh Hoh Hay' heh
- A3:** 29: Uthi ndod'am'ise - Goli' Hay Hay'a -; 30: ndila la nga; 31: (rest); 32: (rest)

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

Eric Akrofi holds an EdD degree in Music Education from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA, and is currently Professor of Music Education at Walter Sisulu University, Nelson Mandela Drive Campus, Mthatha, South Africa. He has over thirty years of teaching experience in universities in Ghana and South Africa. His areas of scholarly research include music analysis and theory, music and arts education in Africa, African music, music and identity. He is author of *Sharing knowledge and experience: A profile of Kwabena Nketia, scholar and music educator* (2002). Accra: Afram Publications (Ghana) Limited.

Luvuyo Dontsa is a senior lecturer at Walter Sisulu University (WSU). He is a creative performer, writer and composer of Africa-oriented compositions and poetry. He is responsible for Ethnomusicology with an emphasis on African music and the Diaspora, and ensembles including Vocal Jazz and Afro-Jazz Ensembles. He is also a government research consultant on Arts and Culture activities. He plays a great role in the running of the university's African Music Archives, and the International Centre for African Music and Dance (ICAMD), South African Chapter. His area of research is Performing Arts in Africa and the Diaspora.

Andreas Engström is a Swedish musicologist, living in Stockholm, Sweden. He is writing his doctoral thesis on experimental music theatre in Sweden in the 1960s. He is also working as a freelance writer and editor in the field of contemporary music and sound art. He is editor-in-chief of the Swedish journal on contemporary music, "Nutida Musik" as well as of ISCM:s "World New Music Magazine". He is presently working on an anthology on Sound Art and is engaged in a book series in four volumes on Nordic Avant Garde in the 20th Century. Andreas Engström is also lecturing at Stockholm University and at Stockholm Royal University Collage of Fine Arts in Contemporary music and Sound art and is engaged as an instructor in the Korean martial art Tae Kwon Do.

James Flolu is Associate Professor in Music Education, and currently Dean, School of Creative Arts, University of Education, Winneba (UEW). He completed his undergraduate studies in 1982 at the University of Cape Coast, Ghana with a BMus (Hons.) and Diploma in Education and obtained the DPhil in African music education from the University of York, England in 1994. His research interests include the instructional and creative processes in indigenous Ghanaian music, and the implications

of Ethnomusicology for music educators in Africa. He was a founding member, and the first Secretary General of the Pan African Society for Musical Arts Education (PASMAE).

Eva Fock, musicologist who specialises in ethnomusicology and anthropology of music. She has conducted research on music in Iceland and the Faeroe Islands, and later among youngsters with a Middle Eastern immigrant background in Denmark. She lectures in ethnomusicology and world music, develops courses and programmes for music education and writes teaching material on Middle Eastern music traditions. Since 2000 she has worked as a freelancer for the Centre for Cultural Political Studies, Royal School of Library and Information Science, Denmark, undertaking cultural political evaluations in Scandinavia.

Nicol Hammond is a PhD student in Ethnomusicology at New York University. She completed her BMus with Distinction at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, in 2005, where she began her research into South African choral music, and issues of national identity and music, areas which remain central to her graduate research. She has been singing in choirs since 1996, and conducting them since 2003.

Jan Hellberg (b. 1964 in Karis, Finland) is a music teacher, a conductor and arranger/composer of choir music and a musicologist. His special interests are ethnomusicology and the music of Christian churches in diverse cultures. He received his Masters in music education from the Sibelius Academy in Helsinki in 1993. He teaches in the music department of the Lärkkulla Academy in Karis and is pursuing doctoral studies in musicology at Åbo Akademi University in Åbo (Turku), both institutions that offer Swedish-language music training in Finland.

Dawn Joseph is a lecturer in Music and Education Studies at Deakin University, Melbourne Campus, Australia. Dawn is formerly from South Africa, Johannesburg, where she taught music at independent schools (primary and secondary). She holds a PhD from Pretoria University, where her thesis focused on outcomes-based music education in Johannesburg, South Africa. Her current research interests include teacher education programmes, African music and cultural diversity, and teacher change. She is currently the Chairperson of the Australian Society for Music Education (VIC) and the Pan African Society for Musical Arts Education MAT Cell co-ordinator for Melbourne.

Jean Ngoya Kidula (PhD Ethnomusicology, UCLA) is an associate professor of music at the University of Georgia in Athens, GA, USA. She teaches ethnomusicology theory and method, general survey of music cultures of the world, specialises in music of Africa – particularly East Africa, African American music and canonic European music history.

Her primary research to date has focused on African religious and ritual music, religious popular and spiritual music in Africa, USA and Sweden, theory, method, history and aesthetics of music in Africa. She has published and presented papers on her research in journals and as chapters in book manuscripts. She is currently working on publications on music in African Christianity with a focus on Western Kenya and the religious music industry.

Dr Elsabé Kloppers holds doctorates in theology and music, as well as a postgraduate degree in philosophy (*cum Laude*). She is Research Associate in the Department of Art History, Visual Arts and Musicology at the University of South Africa and the Department of Practical Theology (University of South Africa), Director of the Institute for Church Music in South Africa, and lecturer in hymnology and liturgical studies at various universities. During 2004 she acted as Co-ordinator of the Travelling Institute for Music Research at the National Research Foundation. She served on the various committees for the new hymnal in Afrikaans (2001). She regularly publishes in scholarly journals and presents papers abroad.

Nicholas Kofie is Associate Professor at the Department of Music, University of Cape Coast, Ghana. He holds a PhD in Systematic Musicology from the University of Hamburg, Germany. He has over twenty years of university teaching experience in Ghana and Kenya. His current research interest is in Music Therapy. He is author of *Contemporary African Music in World Perspectives: Some Thoughts on Systematic Musicology and Acculturation* (1994), Accra: Ghana University Press, and *Challenges of Tertiary Music Education in Post-colonial Africa* (1995), Cape Coast: Central Academic Publishers. He has also published book chapters in German apart from publications in journals.

Leif Lorentzon earned his PhD in the Department of Literature, Stockholm University. His main areas of research are oral and popular literature in Africa south of the Sahara. He is the author of *"An African Focus," A Study of Ayi Kwei Armah's Narrative Africanization* (1999), and numerous articles in journals such as *Research in African Literatures*, *Critique*, *Matatu* and in *Africana: The Encyclopaedia of African and African-American Experience*, 2nd ed.

Christine Lucia has worked at the universities of Durban-Westville, Natal, Rhodes, and the Witwatersrand. She has taught music history and music theory, and has researched South African music of various kinds. She edited an anthology, *The World of South African Music: A Reader* (Cambridge Scholars Press, 2005), and her other publications include work on Kevin Volans, Joshua Mohapeloa, and Abdullah Ibrahim. She is Editor of *SAMUS: Journal of South African Music Studies*.

Sandra Ruth Malan is a music education specialist with training and experience in drama and art teaching. She teaches music and drama full-time at an Independent school and is a freelance presenter of in-service training workshops (Arts and Culture) at the Music Department of the University of Stellenbosch, South Africa. She completed her Masters Degree in Music Education at the University of Stellenbosch in 2004. The title of her thesis is: "Celebrating Cultural Diversity: Implementing an Integrated Approach to Arts and Culture in the Intermediate Phase of Curriculum 2005". She is married with two children and lives in Stellenbosch.

Minette Mans, previously Associate Professor in Performing Arts at the University of Namibia, obtained her doctorate in ethnomusicology, choreology and education. Her main field of interest is the dance and music of Namibia. She has been deeply involved in Namibian education. Her publications include three books and numerous articles in international journals, a research handbook, encyclopaedias and books. Mans serves internationally on several editorial boards, and the Board of Directors of the International Society of Music Education. She served as Chair of the ISME Music in Schools and Teacher Education Commission, and as Vice-President of the Pan African Society of Musical Arts Education.

Patricia Achieng Opondo is a senior lecturer in African Music and Dance and Director of the African Music Project in the School of Music at the University of KwaZulu-Natal in Durban, South Africa. Patricia's areas of research include public sector ethnomusicology, performance practice, visual representation of culture, exhibition of cultural heritage, and African women's ritual and recreational expressions. She has published on the refiguring of gendered and ethnic identities in South African women's engagement with new performance frontiers, cultural policies in Kenya, Luo women's recreational songs and dances, and recently completed a six-part educational DVD series on aspects of Zulu music and dance.

Tobias Pontara studied flute at the Royal Danish Academy of Music in Copenhagen and has been active as a professional musician. His doctoral thesis *Letters from the world of autonomous music. The discursive construction of musical autonomy in the contemporary classical record-sleeve* (in Swedish) was completed in Spring 2007. He is currently a senior lecturer at the Department of Musicology and Performing Studies, Stockholm University.

Maria Smit is music educator and lexicographer, holds B A Mus, BMus Hons, and HED (Stellenbosch University); B A Hons and ULSM (Unisa); MA (General Linguistics) and DLitt (Afrikaans and Dutch) (Stellenbosch University). Music teacher since 1976, part-time lecturer in School Music from 1979 to 1994. Co-editor of the *South African Music*

Dictionary (1992-2000). Appointed as Senior Lecturer in Music Education at Stellenbosch University in April 1997; since January 2005 as Associate Professor. Currently working on the compilation of an electronic database for African music terminology, and on innovative strategies for the training of Arts and Culture educators.

Christy Smith obtained her bachelor's degree in Music Education and her Masters in Musicology at the University of the Witwatersrand. The daughter of a Methodist minister, she has grown up visiting, and playing music in, a variety of churches since her early teens. Her research is reflective of her involvement in the Methodist church, experimental, age-specific churches, such as The Ontological Shift Café, and charismatic and non-denominational churches. She currently teaches music at various schools and, since 2003, has directed the worship at The New Harvest Christian Fellowship – a non-denominational, multi-generational church striving to be socially relevant in the South African context.

Donato Somma studied music at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, South Africa. He graduated in 2004 and is completing a Masters degree in musicology at the same institution, where he is also involved in interdisciplinary teaching.

Robin Stevens is Associate Professor of Music Education in the Faculty of Education at Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia. He has undertaken research into the history of school music education in Australia, Britain, South Africa and the Asia-Pacific Region. His present research is focused on the use of Tonic Sol-fa in countries outside the United Kingdom from both historical and contemporary perspectives. He is editor of the *Australian Online Journal of Arts Education*, research editor of the *Australian Journal of Music Education* and an editorial board member for *Research Studies in Music Education*, the *International Journal of Music Education – Research*, *Music Education Research International* and the *Asia-Pacific Journal of Arts Education*.

Stig-Magnus Thorsén, musicologist with a focus on studies in the sociology of music. His research started at the Institute for Musicology at Uppsala University, Sweden. He completed a PhD thesis on the social functions of music in a Pentecostal congregation, and ran a project on Music and Work. In the 1980s he became director of the School of Music and Music Education at Göteborg University. The 1990s were spent as a consultant for Swedish foreign aid to South African music education and cultural exchange. He developed courses for music education in multicultural environments, and researched culture and development related to music education in South Africa.

Zoliswa Twani is a music lecturer at the Walter Sisulu University, Eastern Cape Province, where she teaches History of Music, Recorder and Piano (Introduction). She

holds the degree of Master in Music (Music Education) from the University of Pretoria (South Africa) and is currently a PhD musicology student at the University of the Witwatersrand (Johannesburg). She is passionate about community service and community development, and does research on music activities in South African prisons, which was sparked by her involvement in two Umtata Christian Church ministries: Prison Ministry and Job Creation Ministry.

Thembele Vokwana teaches courses in Music in World Cultures Today at the University of South Africa, Pretoria. His academic and research interests include medical ethnomusicology, especially the intersection between music, HIV/AIDS advocacy, and healing. South African Black choral music (*amakhwaya*) and post-apartheid youth culture form part of his research interests. Currently, he is a Fulbright scholar pursuing a PhD in Ethnomusicology at Wesleyan University, Connecticut.

MUSIC & IDENTITY: Transformation & Negotiation

Significant political and social changes worldwide have affected music life and the role of music in society. A group of scholars from Nordic countries and from Southern Africa became interested in analysing this process and formed a research network focusing various musics' relation to individual and social identities. This volume is the result of the Swedish South African Research Network (SSARN) that started in 2002. A proposal written by Eric Akrofi (Mthatha, South Africa), Maria Smit (Stellenbosch, South Africa), and Stig-Magnus Thorsén (Göteborg, Sweden) resulted in a grant for 2004-2006 from the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (Sida) and the National Research Foundation (NRF) of South Africa.

The unique approach is an underlying debate in the network on how different scholars have interpreted concepts as identity, musical encounters, values, and authenticity. Thus, researchers with different professional backgrounds and theoretical and methodological approaches juxtapose various concepts of identity and its relation to music and musicians. This volume broadens the concepts to include identities, which are fragmented, dislocated, repressed, modernised, liberated, chosen, and narrated. The transformation and negotiation of identities lie within the multiplicities of contrasts and nuances, which unfold in our contemporary environment. It entails processes as diverse as localisation and globalisation, appropriation and assimilation, Westernisation and Africanisation. Musicians have to transform and negotiate their identities within a continuum that includes indigenous elements, traditional beliefs, and customs, versus city living and modernity containing hybrid forms of musics and arts. Music can in this sense be instrumental in empowering and enlightening individuals and groups, but can also hamper the development of human relations.

This volume offers 25 essays, written from different theoretical and methodological perspectives, in which the authors grapple with issues of music and identity in order to open up interest for and on-going academic discussion on this topic.